

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00008640919



Class BJ1852

Book .H5

THE



PRINCIPLES OF COURTESY:

WITH

230
3052

HINTS AND OBSERVATIONS

ON

MANNERS AND HABITS.

BY

GEORGE WINFRED HERVEY.

"A Christian is God Almighty's gentleman: a gentleman, in the vulgar, superficial way of understanding the word, is the Devil's Christian."

ARCHDEACON HARE.

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
Nos. 329 AND 331 PEARL STREET,
(FRANKLIN SQUARE.)
1852.

BJ1852
H5

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1852, by

HARPER & BROTHERS,

In the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New York.

PREFACE.

It is the design of this work to illustrate and enforce the duty of Christian courtesy. The author was induced to write it by observing that nearly all who have treated of manners, have inculcated pernicious opinions, appealed to unworthy motives, and taught a heartless and selfish system of politeness. Much of their advice a Christian cannot too carefully shun. Without pretending to remarkable piety or surpassing refinement, or presuming to pronounce a beatitude on those who may regard his own suggestions, he cannot but heartily respond to the words of the royal Psalmist: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."

It is with unfeigned regret that the author is thus compelled to warn his readers against the sentiments of many of this class of writers; for they have all intended to benefit the world, and have in some respects been highly useful to it. They have diffused among all classes a knowledge of their lesser rights and duties, enlightened their notions of decorum, refined what was coarse, raised the mean to manliness, and taught benevolence to stoop to small services. They are generally handled without mercy where they are innocent, and treated with clemency where they are faulty. Those who keenly feel the application of their rules of propriety, cast forth

broad charges against them, while they adopt without a murmur their debasing principles, because they are but too congenial with their depraved desires. Those who expose the defects of their principles, too often unjustly condemn their many excellent precepts along with those defects, and hastily conclude that good-breeding is inseparable from bad morals. But apart from their mischievous ethics, it may truly be said, that no class of writers in the whole range of secular literature has done more to improve the social condition of mankind.

The author is not aware that any work of this kind, intended for the perusal of Christians in general, has hitherto been attempted. He has happened to enter what is, in some sort, untravelled territory: for while some writers have touched upon it here and there, none have gone far beyond the *secular* customs of polished society. He has one time or another read many of the works on manners, which have been written during the last four hundred years, and knows not how widely they may have diffused their spirit over these pages. Two or three of them have afforded him direct aid: yet the work is substantially the result of independent observation and thought. Many of the following rules were suggested while studying the sacred statutes and the observances of primitive believers. Some very valuable precepts, however, have been derived from contemporary examples of courtesy, who, while they were unaffectedly obeying the refined dictates of evangelical love, were unwittingly furnishing matter for these pages.

It is not for such that this is written; but for those who, from whatever cause, are wont to overlook some of the tender charities of life. Yet the author ventures to affirm, that those

who fancy they are already sufficiently courteous, are daily growing more unlike what they imagine themselves to be, and that those who seem to themselves least to need admonitions on this subject, ought most to heed them.

In laying down rules of propriety, the writer has not noticed matters of common decency on the one hand, or those of temporary and local etiquette on the other. He has aimed to treat of those observances of propriety and elegance which are practised always, and wherever the English language is spoken. He has also sought to keep clear of sectarian and denominational peculiarities, and to make his work useful to Christians of every sect and name.

He has addressed his work to Christians, not because he thinks them singularly deficient in courtesy or in general refinement. They number among them persons of every culture, condition, and rank, and in respect of manners are not distinguishable from the rest of mankind, except so far as the ameliorating power of their religion has made them peculiar. His design has been to provide a safe guide, not only for the Christian, but for all men. He has not as yet been able to comprehend how there can be more than one authoritative code of morals. He believes that none but the evangelical code can be taught either with impunity or advantage, and that it defines the duties of every human being, as well the duties of the man of the world as those of the Christian.

May this work, in connection with other instrumentalities, so guide some pious pilgrim along the narrow way, that he shall finally be presented before the presence of the King in Zion, without "spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTION	xiii

PART I.

THE SPIRIT OF COURTESY.

CHAPTER I.

HUMILITY	27
----------------	----

CHAPTER II.

GRAVITY	38
---------------	----

CHAPTER III.

CHEERFULNESS	45
--------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

GENTLENESS	52
------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

COURAGE	58
---------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

MEEKNESS	62
----------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

	Page
SENSIBILITY.....	68

CHAPTER VIII.

DELICACY.....	73
---------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

PROPRIETY.....	83
----------------	----

CHAPTER X.

SINCERITY.....	89
----------------	----

CHAPTER XI.

ZEAL.....	97
-----------	----

PART II.

THE FORMS OF COURTESY IN RELIGIOUS SOCIETY.

CHAPTER I.

ORDER.....	107
------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

DEPORTMENT AT CHURCH.....	116
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

POSTURE IN PRAYER.....	125
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV.

	Page
POSTURE OF A CONGREGATION DURING THE SINGING OF A CHOIR..	131

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF A CONGREGATION DURING SINGING	135
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHOIRS.....	139
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEPARTMENT AT PRAYER-MEETINGS	142
---	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES	145
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IX.

FUNERALS AND MOURNING.....	149
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

ECCENTRICITIES	157
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI.

CANT	167
------------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

RANT	172
------------	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN SOCIABILITY.....	175
----------------------------	-----

PART III.

THE FORMS OF COURTESY IN SECULAR SOCIETY.

CHAPTER I.

	Page
HONOR AND PRECEDENCE.....	185

CHAPTER II.

SALUTATIONS	190
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

DEPORTMENT IN THE STREET.....	194
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV.

TRAVELLING.....	198
-----------------	-----

CHAPTER V.

HOSPITALITY	208
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER VI.

THE TABLE	217
-----------------	-----

CHAPTER VII.

DRESS	225
-------------	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

VISITS AND CALLS.....	239
-----------------------	-----

CHAPTER IX.

SUNDAY VISITING.....	243
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

	Page
VISITING THE SICK.....	247

CHAPTER XI.

VISITING THE POOR.....	251
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

THE SIMPLICITY OF TRUE BENEFICENCE.....	255
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DUTIES OF THE NEW CONVERT TO HIS FORMER COMPANIONS	264
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INTERCOURSE OF THE CHRISTIAN WITH THE WORLD.....	268
--	-----

CHAPTER XV.

THE DIVINE LAW OF COMPLAISANCE.....	277
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

✓ FLEXIBILITY OF MANNERS AND INFLEXIBILITY OF PRINCIPLE.....	287
--	-----

INTRODUCTION.

CHRISTIAN courtesy is the becoming expression of love to God and man in every sphere of social intercourse. The term has a more extensive signification than is commonly attached to politeness, which means elegance of exterior manners, without regard to disposition or motive. Courtesy is not only a practical, but an internal virtue; it is the union of pleasing manners with benevolent feelings—a union both intimate and congenial. It is evangelical charity enthroned in the soul, dictating to her compliant and graceful minister, the outward conduct.

Love to God is an essential element of Christian courtesy. Whatever affection for a fellow-creature any may boast of, if it is not coupled with love to the Creator, it must be radically defective. We cannot perform all the services we owe to our neighbor, while we are withholding the services due to God. Were courtesy no more than the art of general complaisance, it would be practised most successfully by disregarding the first table of the law, since, at present, the generality of men are best pleased when it is consigned to forgetfulness. But this virtue consults first what is kind, then what is pleasing. By being dutiful to God, the Christian may occasionally fail to

gratify his neighbors, but he will in general promote their enduring happiness.

Courtesy claims the dignity of a Christian virtue, originating in divine grace, and constantly dependent on it for vigor and growth. It should not be confounded with that natural desire of pleasing, which is cherished by all persons towards those whose approbation or affection they wish to win. This desire is selfish, and he who cherishes it exclusively, expends his attentions on such only as are connected with him by some tie of interest. It is this principle that commonly actuates all those services which men include under the name of politeness. It prompts the man of the world to show respect for a superior, esteem for an equal, or kindness to an inferior, who may have it in his power to do him an injury or confer on him a benefit. The social feelings express themselves by a language generally tender, sometimes elegant. Each sex naturally aims to preserve towards the other a delicate and pleasing deportment.¹ Accordingly the masters in the school of fashionable politeness, direct persons to the company of the opposite sex as best adapted to its cultivation. But true courtesy, while it is refined by good society, and cheers every relation in life, rises out of the well-spring of grace in the renewed soul, and sends its refreshing influence alike to the lovely and the hateful, the beneficent and the injurious.

Many religious professors suppose they have fully obeyed the apostolic precept, "Be courteous," when they have behaved agreeably to what is termed the dictates of gentility,

¹ "Viris propter fœminas et feminis propter viros vitio naturæ ingenta est placendi voluntas."—*Tertullian*. Also 1 Cor. 7 : 33, 34.

² 1 Pet. 3 : 8.

which is a certain delicacy of mind, quite consistent with extreme corruption of heart. Such persons by their conformity to the world, virtually deny that the power of the gospel can refine and polish the manners. People of fashion are unable to discover in them that dignity, kindness, and sincerity which belong to the children of God. Beholding their servile homage to fashion and folly, they contemptuously echo in their ears the words of their professed Master: "What do ye more than others?"

The Scriptures teach a courtesy of which the politeness of the world is only the cold and lifeless image. They recommend a tenderness and delicacy of disposition, whose outward signs men of the world sometimes exhibit, but which Christians only are wont inwardly to nurture. The benevolence, the meekness and gentleness which Christians embody in their conduct, cannot be fitly manifested to the world through the same forms that are used by persons of an opposite spirit. Hence it was that our divine Master, finding mankind practising a code of manners ill suited to the character of his disciples, taught them the peculiar deportment which "becometh saints;" at the same time exhibiting in himself a pattern of courtesy which all his followers, in all ages, might imitate and admire. Men of the world have not been insensible to the truth that the evangelical precepts teach whatever is pleasing in behavior, and whatever is requisite to regulate the commerce of society. But they have yielded only a partial and external compliance with these holy rules, supplying their supposed deficiencies by the addition of corrupt and corrupting maxims of their own. They have undertaken to improve on the work of a divine hand, supposing, as it seems, that their

own superficial systems furnish safer and more elegant rules of conduct than those which may be drawn from the oracles of God. Rutilius Rufus, as Tully informs us, was wont to say that no painter could supply the parts of the picture of Venus, which Apelles left unfinished at Cos, the beauty of the face which he had completed making all artists despair of painting the rest of the body. If the Sacred Scriptures be incomplete as a system of moral duties, these authors cannot attempt to supply its defects without betraying their own work, and marring the beauty of the divine original. They may, and undoubtedly should, give to society laws of propriety, which are only intimated by the sacred institutes. But, while they are not limited to the letter of Scripture, they ought never to violate its spirit.

The writer is aware that less copiousness and less particularity would have rendered his work more acceptable to some. He trusts, however, that the generality of readers will duly appreciate the more practical portions of this work. They will here meet with nothing more minute than they find in some parts of the epistles of Peter, and Paul, and John, and it can be shown from these their writings, that they descended to particulars in their verbal more than they did in their written communications to the churches. There is not, to be sure, equal definiteness to be found in the works of many of our practical religious writers, who, it is to be feared, deal too largely in general principles. And this has especially been the case in treating of the subject in question. To help make good our assertion, we will quote a sentence from a late pious writer. Discoursing on a kindred theme, he says: "Think of others as reason and religion require, and treat them as it is your

duty to do, and you will not be far from a well-polished behavior."³ Now it must be plain to any ordinary mind which has at all considered the difficulty of successful moral instruction, that it would take not a few comprehensive precepts like the above, and those frequently repeated, to move any one to the practice of good-breeding. All such generalities leave on most minds the impression that it cannot be an important subject concerning which so little is said, that if this be all that is to be taught, they have nothing to learn, and that if they do but bear in mind the *principle*, they need not concern themselves about its *applications*. Each one feels himself at liberty to put his own construction on it, and consequently no two persons will reduce it to the same practical results, while the most part will wrest it from its right meaning or neglect it altogether. The attempt to enforce any other duty according to this method leads to similar results, as Cowper has illustrated in sportive measure.

"*Renounce the world*—the preacher cries.

'We do'—a multitude replies,

While one as innocent regards

A snug and friendly game at cards ;

And one, whatever you may say,

Can see no evil in a play ;

Some love a concert or a race ;

And others shooting and the chase.

Reviled and loved, renounced and follow'd,

Thus bit by bit the world is swallow'd."

By none does the maxim, *abundans cautela nocet nemini*,⁴

³ Such generalities remind one of the father who said to his son :
"I entreat you, John, once for all, be a fine gentleman."

⁴ Superfluous caution does no harm.

deserve to be more constantly borne in mind than by writers on manners.

Some object to precise rules, that they impose on us a lifeless uniformity and a mechanical constraint. And this objection has some weight when brought against that school of manners which makes the perfection of demeanor to consist in mere extrinsic proprieties; but it does not lie against the methods here adopted; to wit, that of first inculcating the Gospel virtues, from which the best amenities of deportment proceed, and *then* showing in what those amenities consist. It is a fact that seems to have hitherto escaped the impugnors of such discussion of the subject, that there are as many ways of being courteous as there are of being rude, even with respect to the same actions, and that there are really no greater checks upon our freedom in the one case than in the other. The author does not pretend that those who do not, in some particulars, conform to the following rules of propriety, cannot, by their deviations from them, be equally well-bred with those who exactly observe them all. In some cases he has selected observances that are sanctioned by the best examples: in others he has given hints, the spirit of which is more to be regarded than their letter, and with a view to show *in what direction propriety lies*, and to fix the boundary of rudeness, leaving each one to pick his own path, so he does not wander from the main course and does not overstep the conventional line.

Others object to all precepts on this subject, on the ground that "instinct," or "intuition," or "the sense of propriety" will teach them all they need to know of manners. But they might just as reasonably conclude that a heathen who had

never heard of Christianity could be sufficiently instructed in its doctrines and duties by the light of reason and conscience, as that they could obtain right notions of courtesy, simply by consulting their own uninformed minds. These very persons, do not disapprove instruction on other subjects, and would deride as absurd the pretensions of any one who should boast that he could readily master any art without availing himself of the experience of his predecessors. They would say that he showed either a conceited notion of his own powers, or ignorance of the art to be acquired.

Equally unfounded is the opinion that nothing but a knowledge of the world is necessary to form our manners. It may, to be sure, operate in many ways to our improvement in tact and address; but it can never establish our minds in those principles with which we ought to commence the world, and without whose continual guidance our observations in society will be of little avail to us. We have gained an important point when we have formed a habit of thinking on this subject. By patient and well-directed thought we are brought to comprehend those great principles which are the basis of all correct conduct, and to use them as tests of the countless particulars which make up the sum-total of one's manners. The Apostle Paul endeavors to lead us to the practice of the minor morals, by exhorting us to meditate on these things: "Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." In these matters, one's own experience is less valuable to him than is commonly supposed. He seldom learns a

lesson of experience till it is too late to reduce it to practice. He cannot turn to his own account the wisdom he gains from many occurrences and emergencies, because just such do not happen to one more than once in a lifetime. Accordingly, we find a Casa, a Chesterfield, and a Knigge, towards the close of life, lamenting the errors into which thoughtlessness had betrayed them, and while by the help of their own experience they were eloquently warning others, they reflected that it was too late to make their dear-bought wisdom advantageous to themselves. It is our purpose to excite the mind of the reader to that reflection, circumspection, and forecast which will forestall the chidings of experience, and guide him in circumstances where experience is too tardy in coming to his aid.

There is a notion afloat in the world, that courtesy is a virtue that becomes only men of title, office, wealth or learning, and that they alone have the power and the inducement to implant and foster it in the heart. This is utterly erroneous. Multitudes of examples might be cited to show that it can thrive amid poverty, ignorance, and obscurity. This thought is well put by Dr. James Fordyce. In a passing remark made while writing on another subject, he says: "I used the phrase *Christian Breeding*: that kind of courtesy which I point out being expressly enjoined by one of the writers of the New Testament. Perhaps you think of St. Paul, that accomplished apostle, who himself became all things to all men, that he might gain some. Such a precept might have been readily suggested by his early education at a seat of learning, and would have come very naturally from the hand that drew so divine a picture of charity, the parent of meekness. But the fact is, that it fell from the pen of an illiterate man, bred to

the roughest of all employments. It was St. Peter the inspired fisherman that said, 'Be courteous'—to intimate that the religion which he had learned from the meek and lowly Jesus, was able to soften the keenest and cool the hottest temper, and even give gentleness to one trained amongst winds and waves."

Some excellent Christians are prompt to execute large schemes of benevolence, but slow to perform the little offices of kindness. Others are more careful to avoid the dissimulation of the polite than the offensiveness of the rude. Others again are attentive to the inward man while they neglect the outward, and are more intent on detecting hateful thoughts than practising amiable virtues. It is not to be denied that these are the delinquencies of some who are eminent in godliness: they are delinquencies nevertheless. We should consider that those improprieties of conduct which render us offensive to one another are oftentimes displeasing to God. Robert Hall, in conversation with a friend, once remarked: "Again, sir, there is Mr. ——— how uncouth he is, sir! why, sir, that behavior would not do in the world; he cannot be aware how offensive it is, or certainly as a religious man he would endeavor to correct it. Many persons forget, sir, that these are Christian precepts: 'Be courteous, tender, and kind-hearted.'"

It is mortifying to admit that many Christians do not habitually practise that courtesy which their sacred books so clearly teach. They have in general given less attention to the formation of pleasing manners than the children of this world. Hence they have frequently been equalled in exterior deportment by those who knew no other law of conduct than

the empty mimicry of the Christian graces. Many, it is to be feared, have turned away with disgust from the beautiful simplicity of Christianity when they have witnessed the offensive singularity of some of her conspicuous votaries. Alonzo Cano, the Spanish sculptor, is said to have refused the offices of a priest when dying, because, as he said, the crucifix he brought with him was so bunglingly executed. Will it be said that the generality of unbelievers are not so fastidious? It is true that as a class they have not a more delicate sense of propriety than believers. Yet many, no doubt, have preferred being elegantly lost to being vulgarly saved.

The Christian is commanded to "adorn the doctrine of Christ his Saviour in all things." The mysterious truths he believes, and the severe morality he observes, require the most engaging demeanor to illuminate the one and to soften the other. Courtesy is an ornament of such singular comeliness that all the world unites in admiring it, and sets the highest value upon it, regarding it as the chief of the virtues and the hider of many faults. Nay, many deem worthy of a place among the glorified, persons who, in their lifetime, gave no better evidence of a gracious renewal than a sweet and gentle deportment. Dangerous as such a delusion must ever be, it shows that the milder virtues are appreciated by those who do not cultivate them. The hearts of the worldly are not affected by heroic acts of self-denial, but they are captivated by the refined attentions of Christian kindness; they know not how to estimate great sacrifices to the cause of God, but they receive the little services of courtesy as the free-will offerings of Christian love, and as pledges that she

will place still costlier oblations on the altar of a common humanity. They are easily convinced that those who show a delicate regard for their temporal quiet sincerely desire their eternal peace.

PART I.

Of the virtues severally considered in the first part, most originate in evangelical charity, and all are its inseparable attendants. They are viewed, not in their general relations, but mainly as elements of courtesy.

CHAPTER I.

HUMILITY.

“CHARITY,” says Paul, “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” So far otherwise, it shrinks into nothingness in view of the glory of God and the borrowed glory of man, and its self-partiality is lost in affection for others. Humility, therefore, is but charity bowing to do homage and stooping to deeds of kindness. As a beneficent grace, its mission is to make and preserve peace. It puts an end to the animosities and contentions which pride incites, and even disarms and takes captive pride itself. Causing mutual deference, subjection, and respect, it provides a strong bond of fellowship and union among mankind. It endeavors to sink beneath the notice of the world, and yet its very self-abasement excites the wonder and wins the praise of all. Pride, inflated with a self-flattery equal to its contempt of others, provokes us to overlook any excellence it may rightfully claim, and to search after its defects; humility, on the contrary, is annihilated by the superiority of others, and is so ashamed of its own virtues as to conceal them, or, at most, to allow only slight glimpses of them. This makes us desire a full view, and we are stimulated to the quest of discove-

ries by the difficulty of making them. What it contrives to obscure, charms us more than what it reveals, and what is entirely denied to sight is more than supplied by the creations of the imagination.

By humility, the apostle appears to have understood the disposition which leads us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. He does not mean, as some suppose, that we should have a complete knowledge of all our virtues, and regulate our self-estimation accordingly; neither, as others suppose, that we should be blind to all our moral excellences, and cherish a contempt of ourselves. He means that we should have such lowly notions of our character and life, as a true conception of the perfectness of God and our unlikeness to Him could lead us to form. If Christians obey the divine requirement, and esteem others better than themselves—seeing in themselves defects of motive and zeal which they cannot possibly read in the hearts of others, they must in general undervalue their own character; were they to set what the world would deem an accurate estimate on their virtues, the most eminent of them would be in danger of spiritual pride. Whereas their piety will, in general, be found proportional to their ignorance of their excellence and their knowledge of their faults.

There are multitudes who account a Christian spirit as very foreign from dignity and greatness of spirit. Such persons do well to abhor all baseness, but they would do better first to learn what baseness is. Thinking that whatever is mortifying to pride is meanness, they fancy themselves to be performing noble deeds, while a person who adopts the Gospel

as his measure of moral magnitudes, thinks those deeds fall far short of magnanimity. It should be our purpose to perform, not great actions, but just, kind, meek, and self-denying actions. Nor is there any true nobleness apart from these.

It is a mark of humility to associate with our inferiors, if we place ourselves on an equal footing with them. But if we prefer their society to that of our equals or superiors, because they show us more deference than we receive elsewhere, or with a view to be foremost among them, pride is manifestly the main-spring of our conduct. It was in a like spirit that Cæsar said he had rather be the first man in a rural village, than the second man in Rome.

Humility does not lead us to underrate our moral energies as assisted by divine grace. It makes us despise the attainments we have made, when we compare them with those we ought to have made. He who is proudly content with his present character forgets the dignity of his nature, and of his destiny. We should be humble, not so much in view of what we have, as in view of what we might have.

Sincere humility before man can only spring from humility before God. The moment we lose sight of the disparity between Infinite Perfection and our own moral character, we are in danger of exalting ourselves in the sight of our fellow-men. We may feel the deepest veneration for our neighbor, and yet, being misled by that same veneration, we may erect him into a false standard. While in our thoughts we are careful to keep ourselves at a due distance from him, we have raised him on too high an eminence, and have consequently elevated

ourselves in an equal degree. So that practically we act as if we were his equal, if not his superior, though, at the same time, we may feel ourselves to be very inferior to what we imagine him to be. Or if we should not imagine him to be farther from us than he really is, so as to lead us to draw disrespectfully near to him, still a magnified view of him may lead us to a misplaced and ridiculous homage. We may be somewhat like a man that, by mistaking the height of a door, stoops needlessly low in passing through it.

The want of humility in the sight of God fosters not only arrogance towards men, but also what is scarcely less offensive in society, presumption as to things.¹ For if one does not over-estimate himself, in comparison of others, yet if he entertains too high an opinion of his own faculties, and shows this sort

¹ "There is an important distinction to be observed between two different offices of *humility*, or, as some would express it, two different kinds of *humility*, which are not always found in the same person. The one consists in forming a modest estimate of one's own *individual* powers and worth, compared with that of the rest of mankind; the other, in not overrating the *human* faculties—in estimating as humbly as we ought, the powers and capacities of *man in general*. Now there are many who observe one of these rules, but violate the other: partly perhaps from not attending to the difference between them. A man may be entirely free from personal arrogance—from any undue pretensions to superiority over others—and may, so far, be justly regarded as a modest and humble-minded man;—and yet may err most grievously in exercising his faculties on subjects which lie out of their reach; reasoning and dogmatizing on things beyond reason, and presumptuously prying into the mysteries of the Most High. Such a man would not be at all checked in this fault by any admonitions against despising others, and overrating himself in comparison of them. On the other hand, a man may be personally arrogant and yet form a just and modest estimate of the human powers. This appears to have been the case with Warburton."—*Archbishop Whately's Bampton Lectures*, London, 1833.—Appendix p. 542.

of pride in his talk, he will be highly displeasing to listeners. Who is more disagreeable than he who boasts that he has unsealed some of the greatest mysteries of our religion, or confidently claims the ability to explain what all learned men confess themselves incompetent to clear up—to comprehend doctrines which most of the pious are content to believe without presuming entirely to understand. To this class belong those who have fixed themselves upon a pedestal of unsinning perfection. However modest and deferential in general demeanor these persons may be, their pretensions must be more or less obnoxious to those who do not believe spotless holiness to be attainable by mortals, or if attainable, deny that those who have attained it, will know it, much less disposed to confess it. Akin to these are they who rest in their creed with blind confidence, maintain that they are infallible, and their belief is the truth without any possible admixture of error, and refuse to submit it to a candid examination.

Nor should we suppose we are humbling ourselves when we confess the depravity of mankind in general. It is quite possible for us to admit all this, and at the same time inly bless ourselves that we are not worse than the generality of the species, or that we have reached as high a degree of moral excellence as any one in like circumstances is able to attain.

Now all these various shades of arrogance and presumption are engendered by our making one another the standard of comparison. How searching the truth which the apostle Paul declares concerning some who measure themselves by themselves : and he adds, that he dare not make himself of the number

of such, but will only boast according to the measure which God has distributed to all.

Most of those who pride themselves in doing none but noble actions, are unwilling to do anything how good soever in tendency, that requires a sacrifice of their pride. Those who have been merely taught to despise a mean act, are apt to set down submission, self-denial, forgiveness, and unrequited kindness in the catalogue of mean actions.

Men of the world are satisfied with that sort of manners which consists in the observance of the mere exterior forms of humility.² They know that without putting on, at least, the appearance of it, they would not be able to endure each other's behavior, and so all agreeable intercourse would cease. But for it, the vanity of each would inflame that of the other, haughtiness would provoke haughtiness, and envy irritate envy, until their assemblies, instead of affording pleasure, would excite disgust and cause deadly encounters. But by hiding their pride under a cloak of humility, and their aversion under an exterior of respect, enemies meet as friends, and the most diverse characters as kindred spirits. If the shadow of humility is of such sovereign use in neutralizing the opposing elements of society, even making the contact of mutual adversaries tolerable to each other, may we not hope that when its substance shall be more widely distributed among men, it will serve to unite their hearts in holy brotherhood, and to make

² "The general idea of showing respect, in all nations, is by making yourself less; but the manner, whether by bowing the body, kneeling, prostration, pulling off the upper part of your dress, or taking away the lower, is a matter of custom."—*Sir Joshua Reynolds*.

their intercourse the source of the purest enjoyment.

It is among those classes of society where wealth, power, and rank assist the growth of pride, that external humility is in the greatest request. Taking for granted that men esteem themselves to be somewhat higher than the rank they occupy, each aims to treat others according to their own standard of personal merit, at the same time seeking to convince them by his own condescension that he does not regard himself as their superior. Schemes of ambition, rival interests, the claims of precedence, and a high sense of dignity, require the great to observe in their intercourse with one another, a respectful and conciliatory etiquette.

Since the prevailing superficial manners cannot in the present state of society reform themselves, and as worldly people who have adopted these cannot be expected to alter them for the better, it is the peculiar duty of Christians to exercise that intrinsic humility which will render these forms the true outward expressions of inward feelings. Were this humility more generally cultivated by Christians, what improvement in manners might be anticipated even in what are now esteemed the most refined circles. How much less of dissimulation and affectation would be used to hide the hatefulness of pride. How much less of hypocrisy in acts of politeness with which many are not ashamed to confess their hearts have nothing to do, but which they perform as matters of course and regard as nothing more than customary but unmeaning forms.

Without seeming to be humble the Christian can-

not please ; without being really so he cannot be sincere. He ought therefore to omit a condescension when sincerity requires it, but not when mere pride or hatred suggests the omission. While it is safer to incur the displeasure of a friend than the rebukes of conscience, still an enlightened moral sense will always avoid the expression of every malignant feeling. It is commendable to perform a courteous action while the heart is inflamed with anger, although it is more commendable not to be angry at all. It is laudable to do what is disagreeable to ourselves rather than what is offensive to others. To do a kind act to which we are disinclined with a view to reconcile an enemy or to overcome our pride, is almost a virtue. The man that humbles himself before his enemy while he is yet smarting under wrong and abuse, shows a spirit superior to the flesh, a generosity to which his lower passions are obedient, a heart that does not hate an excellent character for a single blemish found upon it, and a wisdom which prefers peace to his own rights. By a single act of humility he shows that his better judgment disapproves the variance, and that he is willing even at the costly sacrifice of his pride to make the first advance towards a reconciliation. He is not ashamed to own himself in the wrong, nor slow to make every amends to the injured party. Thus, by a meek and conciliating bearing, he drives hatred from the heart of his adversary, and rears there an altar whereon a friendly hand will delight to offer incense to his Lamblike virtues.

Beneath the peculiar manners of the different classes in society, pride is sure to find a lurking-

place. One class plumes itself upon its politeness, another on its vulgarity ; some are proud to be the monthly roses of fashion, changing with the seasons ; others boast that they are the evergreens of gentility, living superior to all vicissitudes. Some love to think that their birth, their wealth, their education, or their travels, give them a superior claim to good breeding. Others imagine they have attained that perfection of manner which consists in showing all that is precise and modal ; others again fancy they have struck upon the road to fashion's throne, when they have merely learned to detect and publish the improprieties of others. Numbers, in private stations, think humility adorns the character of the great, and casts a veil of modesty over brilliant achievements, but that the obscurity of their sphere excuses them from exhibiting a lowliness of spirit. Would not, say they, the observance of the submissive virtues render us abject ; would not a compliance with the minor dictates of humility in our uncourtly intercourse with one another, and with our superiors, be regarded a mark of the narrowness of our minds, and serve but to call forth the insults of those who should discover how meekly we could endure them ? Is not a bluff and independent bearing the only shield whereby the democracy can protect itself against the aristocracy ? But let such consider that there is in humility itself a self-protecting dignity, that pride is always despised and hated, while an humble deportment is sure to inculcate the same in others. The only remedy for the vanity of the fashionable, the daintiness of the genteel, the pride of the well-bred, the insolence of some classes, and

the rudeness of others, in a word, for most of the discourtesies committed in society, is an obedience to the divine command, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."

What animosities and quarrels have sprung out of a violation of this precept. A single wanton breach of etiquette has arrayed, in fierce hostility, men once peaceful and happy in each other's friendship. Mortals have never yet been able to discover an antidote for wounded pride. It was nothing that Haman reflected on the glory of his riches and the multitude of his children; it was nothing that he was advanced above all the princes of the realm, and had the honor of being the only guest at the royal table, that he received the reverences of the multitude; all this was nothing, while he saw among the retinue of the king, Mordecai refusing to stand up and do him homage. Mordecai the Jew sat at the king's gate. Had he stood up, and bowed, Haman's glory would have been complete: he omitted a ceremony, and Haman was undone.

True humility dwells only in the bosom of those who have repented of their disobedience to God, and of their rejection of his son the Saviour. Reader, be not startled at this declaration. You may have gentility; you may have modesty; but humility, and that deportment which springs honestly from it, you cannot claim unless your soul has bowed low with godly sorrow. No imagined amiableness of nature can be an acceptable substitute for it. Evangelical contrition is the best mark of its presence in the heart, and this can only be exercised by prostrating

the soul at the foot of the atoning cross, and by a simple and sole trust in the sacrifice which hangs thereon. "But," you reply, "this is too low for my pride to stoop." Too low! How low has not your pride already stooped to gain its coveted objects? To what degradation has it not submitted, in order to support itself? Pride scorns no meanness. Lucifer was willing to crawl in the dust to support his dignity. Imitate him no more; neither believe him though he should whisper in your ear the promise, "thou shalt be as a god." Hearken rather to the voice of the Divine Teacher who stands and calls: "Come unto me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."

He who would successfully cultivate humility, should frequently review his bad qualities, and compare them with the opposite perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ. No person can explore the obscure recesses of his heart, without loathing, if not lessening, his pride. He who dwells with pleasure on his virtues is growing vicious, but he who detects and eradicates his vices, is making advances toward true virtue. The former, with his pencil, is daubing the odious images of his faults on the unhewn marble of his character: the latter, with his chisel, cuts away the block, shaves off every superfluous action, brings down every high thought, and, with so much skill and care, polishes his character into the likeness of the divine form of humility.

CHAPTER II.

GRAVITY.

By gravity is here meant that moral virtue which the apostle Paul enjoins upon Christians. It is a feeling composed of seriousness and dignity; as seriousness, it is opposed to levity and mirth; as dignity, it is superior to servility and meanness. As applied to Christian manners, gravity means that calmness and elevation of demeanor which springs from a regenerated mind, an enlightened sense of duty, and a practical faith. It is consistent with high mental endowments, when they are joined with corresponding virtues, but it is not a quality of an unrenewed mind, however gifted in other respects. It is attainable by Christians of ordinary parts, and this virtue is sometimes exhibited by such in great beauty.

Gravity avoids all transports of the passions. It does not betray ill humor and fretfulness; it does not indulge deep melancholy and unrestrained grief, in loud talking and scolding, in frequent exclamations of surprise and fits of laughter. Its expressions of affection are free from silliness and insipidity, as those of disapprobation are void of bluntness and harshness. In religious worship, particularly in pub-

lic worship, it dislikes phrenzy and uproar. It renders to Jehovah the service of the understanding as well as the heart, and the tribute of reason as well as the imagination.

The feeling of gravity is indicated by the general composure of the mind. Every passion is subdued and governed. This habit of the mind shows itself in the tranquillity of the countenance, and a complete mastery over the organs of feeling. While every Christian ought to avoid habits of insensibility, he should obtain the entire command of his countenance. He who has not gained some power over his features, is not the peaceable possessor of his own thoughts. Much against his will and against his interest, he seems by his levity to applaud every merry-andrew, and to reward the services of every jester and teaser. He laughs so heartily at a ludicrous or unseemly accident, that though he is very sorry it happened, others are led to conclude that he rejoices at it. And if he makes an apology to the unfortunate person, and tells him how deeply he regrets what has happened, his suppressed smile is interpreted as proof that his regrets are insincere.

There is a kind of sobriety which is no part of gravity, although it is frequently called by that name. It is more nearly related to moroseness, and is seldom seen in alliance with eminent virtues. While Addison is hitting off a certain licentious character, he says, "And yet he is one of the gravest men in the world," and Juvenal, satirizing the vices of Rome, asks:³ "Is not every street thronged with

³ . . . Quis enim non vicus abundat
Tristibus obscenis? Sat. 2.

grave libertines?" Any person of moderate observation, must have met with people of this description. Still no one should refer a person to this class hastily, for it calls for no little knowledge of the world to avoid mistaking them for those who are truly grave. Though no test is infallible for distinguishing a sterling virtue from a counterfeit, it may be said, in general, that this sobriety wants the unstudied cheerfulness and dignity which more or less enter into the composition of the genuine virtue.

Gravity is not, as some seem to suppose, related to singularity. That strangeness of deportment which some display while engaged in the solemnities of religion, is quite foreign to gravity and unfriendly to its exercise. They cannot address the divine Majesty without making their requests in such a whimsical manner as makes every one smile. They talk on secular topics, and even on laughable ones, without betraying any humor, but for them to discourse about religion, is to change the solemn to the ludicrous, accompanying their remarks, perhaps, with such a hard countenance, or a sorry grimace, as give them an air of seriousness indeed, but it is the seriousness of buffoonery, not that of gravity.

Gravity is far removed from parsimony and littleness in dealings. Economy is a duty which becomes the character of every class of Christians: but what is economy in one man, would be niggardness in another. A poor man may urge his claim for a dime due him, without a violation of gravity. Yet should a man of wealth make his demands for so small a sum with equal vehemence, he would render himself contemptible. A prince would be despised for a per-

sonal quarrel about a fortune with an inferior: a starving beggar would not violate gravity, were he to contest his morsel with a dog. The rich are too much accustomed to regard the economy of the poor as meanness, and the poor who have risen to wealth, too commonly fail to consider that their former economy is present parsimony.

Nor is gravity allied with frivolousness and extreme curiosity. He who gives much attention to small matters, wholly absorbed in trifling employments, and talking much about nothing, may be serious, but he is not grave. He will, in general, be looked upon as having some mental imbecility. The eyes of some persons are microscopes, serving for the discovery and inspection of all small and hidden things. They search for and examine objects which are beneath the attention of any other rational being. They also indulge cravings after petty things; all their ideas are childish, and they pass all their days in a nutshell.

Neither does this virtue approve, though it seldom censures, fopperies and fashionable monstrosities; such as long locks, or bushy whiskers, or undressed mustaches, or garments too scant in some parts, and too full in others, or a profusion of jewelry.

A grave man behaves towards others as besorts his character and office, while he demands nothing more from others than they owe to the same. As he is not haughty, he does not ask others to cringe; as he is not mean, he easily avoids being despised. He never assumes airs with a view to conceal his insignificance. The dignity of his soul apologizes for the humility of his bearing; the soberness of his mind needs not to

be assisted by an affected serenity of countenance. Few, except the godless, find his behavior too austere or sanctimonious. He is not always begging leave to differ from others, nor anxious to make others assent to his opinion. It is not his wont to give advice. When requested, he states the results of his own experience, without upbraiding the novice, or rebuking him who does not follow his counsels. He receives an insult without being too proud to recognize it as such ; he is too grave to resent it. He does not imagine his dignity can be advanced by a strut, nor does he fancy his reputation so secure that he can lose nothing by swaggering. Though he should know exactly the weight of his character in the scales of human opinion, he would not determine its value, till he had weighed it in the balances of the sanctuary.

It is a prevalent opinion that this virtue becomes maturity and old age, but is unsuitable to youth and childhood. The Apostle Paul specifically requires bishops, deacons, aged men, and wives, to be grave. But his not having particularly enjoined the duty on any other class of persons, is no evidence that he did not expect it of them. He may have urged the practice of this virtue upon the officers of churches and the heads of families, as the most effectual way of securing its cultivation among the young, who would naturally look up to them as exemplars. Besides, since their sacred duties and their experience in life would be favorable to the exercise of this virtue, he knew that a want of it would be extremely disgraceful to them. The apostle cannot be understood to excuse any believer, however young, from practising

a grave deportment. On the contrary, in two of his epistles, he gives a general direction concerning this virtue. In the one⁴ advising Timothy to exhort the Ephesian disciples to lead a life of gravity; in the other⁵ urging his Philippian brethren to “think on whatsoever things are grave.” In these passages he addresses Christians, without distinction of age, sex, or station. By inculcating this virtue on the young, St. Paul does not aim to extinguish their peculiar liveliness, but to temper it; not to invest them with an affected venerableness, but to give them an animated dignity—a dignity no less comely in youth than in old age.

Since writing the above paragraph, a beautiful confirmation in verse of the same sentiment has been brought to mind. My not recollecting, at the time, that anything had been said or sung on this subject, makes it the more curious to observe how a great poet, contemplating the works of creation, has arrived at the same conclusion that a small prosier had reached by studying the records of revelation. We allude to the last two stanzas of Southey’s “Holly Tree,” which we beg leave here to quote :

“ And as, when all the summer trees are seen
 So bright and green,
 The holly leaves a sober hue display
 Less bright than they;
 But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
 What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree !

⁴ 1 Tim. ii : 2.

⁵ Philip. iv. : 8.

The Greek words *σεμνοτήτι* and *σεμνά*, in our version translated “honesty” and “honest,” signify *grave* and *gravity*. The word *honesty* is no longer used as synonymous with the Latin *honestas*, as it was in the reign of King James.

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng ;
So would I seem amid the young and gay,
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be,
As the green winter of the Holly Tree."

Before the face of gravity all vice and irreligion is awe-struck and abashed. Beneath its calm and sober eye, every heart swollen by passion, or delirious with pleasure, quails. It is said that on one occasion, when the Roman populace were celebrating a lewd and impious festival in honor of Flora, they were ashamed to proceed while Cato, a man renowned for virtue among them, was present in the theatre. Likewise the grave Christian, by the serious elevation of his demeanor, is a silent rebuke of all iniquity. The wanton and the giddy retire from his presence as from the searching glance of a visible deity. The gravity of his soul speaking in all his actions reproves the impertinent and the trifling. The corrupt do not seek to taint his heart : for they know that it is the temple of the Divine Spirit guarded by armed cherubim, which ever keep at a distance the sacrilegious and the profane.

CHAPTER III.

CHEERFULNESS.

THAT moderate and habitual joy which is so peculiar to Christians, is not so much an independent grace, as it is the result of the exercise of all the graces. The satisfactions of holy submission and trust, the pleasures of eternal hope, the gratification of benevolence, the joys of gratitude, and the delights of fatherly and brotherly love, all seem to swell the perennial stream of cheerfulness in the soul. There is no holy affection that either is not mingled with or does not subside in cheerfulness. Even disappointment, perplexity, and grief, those fatal disturbers of unbelieving minds, bring peace to the trusting soul and prepare it for unusual joy.

But if there be one gracious feeling which contributes to cheerfulness more than any other, it is the exercise of that charity which "hopeth all things." This hope is a reasonable expectation that the Holy Ghost will either regenerate, or continue to sanctify our hearts and those of others, whose sins give us disquiet and pain. It is such a hope that keeps us from those painful forebodings with respect to the everlasting condition of the wicked, which we would otherwise too much indulge. The expectation that

the faults of our brethren, which now mar the beauty of Zion and disturb our devotions, will at length vanish before the power of subduing grace, enables us to continue happy in fellowship with them. This it is that makes Christians so cheerful in their intercourse with the people of the world. For although they cannot entirely approve their conduct and example, they hope by preserving friendly relations with them, to recommend to them the beneficence of their religion. To keep at a sullen distance from the children of this world; to treat them as if we thought them utterly destitute of conscience and beyond the reach of hope; preserving a scornful silence towards them, as though we despised the sinner rather than pitied him, is not to reflect the amiability, condescension, and compassion of our adorable Master—is not to set off religion with those attractions which belong to it. It is the smile of cheerfulness which saves the heavenly from being hateful; and but for it the descent of holy angels must have been terrible to the guilty mortals of olden time.

A cheerful deportment casts a gladdening radiance over the piety of some men, and magnifies their obscure duties into brilliant exploits. It disarms the petty vexations, and sports with the awkward accidents of life. But for it even courtesy itself would be cold and repulsive, and the disclosures of piety in promiscuous assemblies would be marked as hypocrisy and cant. To discharge each duty of social life with the solemnity of one engaged in divine worship; to perform every delicate office of courtesy with a rueful countenance, or to ask for daily bread with as much fervor as one would pray for the conversion of

a soul, is to degrade Christianity into Quixotism, and to render it ridiculous to every worldly mind. But shaded with the golden veil of Cheerfulness, the oracles of conscience may be obeyed without transgressing the laws of propriety, and the sacred fire be kept perpetually blazing upon the altar of the heart without revealing a needless parade of ceremonials.

Cheerfulness is not, as some seem to suppose, inconsistent with our being sorry for our sins, downcast in view of our defects, and desirous of higher spiritual attainments. During the severer exercises of repentance there is indeed little cheerfulness in the soul. Still, godly sorrow, more than any other religious feeling, prepares the mind for sunny days of joy. He who is the frequent subject of such exercises should retire from the gaze of men as soon as he finds himself unable to suppress his grief, else he may be thought a hypocrite, or his religion one of penances and austerities. It is his duty to avoid all such appearances: "be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance." In his moments of sacred privacy, the Christian may and should be the victim of bitter self-accusation. Yet, if he employs these moments aright, he will, in general, be prepared to go forth from his closet with a calm spirit and return to the business of life with a serene and joyful countenance. His intercourse with the King of kings will impart to his conduct a gravity, cheerfulness, and gentleness which will more than realize in him the union of the three graces of mythic story.

Unchristian men are at a loss to understand how a religion, which is associated in their minds with painful emotions, can make its votaries serene and

happy. They fail to perceive that they and the Christian respectively view the Gospel from opposite points. As the *Venus de Medicis* expresses different passions according to the points from which it is contemplated, even thus Christianity shows diverse aspects to these two classes of beholders, and makes different impressions on their minds. The sinner, feeling guilt, and dreading the divine wrath, sees in the Gospel death, judgment, and perdition ; the saint, on the contrary, accounting it his salvation, sees in it hope, triumph, and everlasting bliss. The sinner has cause for viewing the Gospel with the most painful feelings, but he is wrong in supposing it to be the cause of them. The Gospel, properly so called, namely, the glad tidings of salvation through a Redeemer, has nothing that, in itself, is calculated to make men miserable. It does, indeed, presuppose the existence of sin, death, the judgment, and endless misery, but it has not created them ; they are as old as the fallen world, and the fear and self-accusation they excite have always and everywhere been the inalienable heritage of sinners. It is true some corrupters of Christianity have conspired to make it the cheerless system that multitudes have been used to regard it. By the help of their crucifixes they crucify the Son of God afresh ; and they carry his lifeless body back again to the sepulchre by embalming the inanimate form of religion in gloomy cathedrals and cold convents. Their penances, austerities, and purgatories have filled the way of life with reeking and sinking graves, and hung the portals of heaven with death's-heads and cross-bones. But these things are no part of the

religion of Christ. The Gospel was designed to save the believer from unending woe, and from the guilt and foreboding which must ever follow sin. He who truly believes and heartily obeys such a Gospel, ought to be the most cheerful of human beings.

Yet the unregenerate will ever persist in believing that the Gospel can have no better effect on its followers than to fill their minds with gloomy and painful thoughts. They judge of its influence on the truly pious, by its effects on themselves. As they are annoyed by its threatenings, while they are not, like believers, cheered by its promises, they conclude that it awakens in all other minds nothing but fears and alarms. Some have also been led to take this dark view of the glorious Gospel by the opinion of many pious persons, who suppose the highest style of Christian to be one whose deportment is severe and sober amidst every variety of circumstances—one who rarely or never smiles, and is incapable of laughing. How comely soever such behavior may appear on some occasions, if it be habitual, it is incompatible with a tender sensibility, a lively faith, and a bright hope. That is doubtless the most mature piety which enables one to bear his personal vexations and ills with mild resignation, to practise self-denials with unaffected delight, and to suffer persecution, for Christ's sake, with meekness and joy.

Cheerfulness should not be mistaken for levity and simpering. The former is an excess, the latter an affectation of it. Both are different from the cheerfulness of the Christian. This is a habitual temper of the mind, indicated, not by a smile, a

grin, or a laugh, but by the whole tenor of the conduct. The cheerful Christian seems always at peace with himself, and with all the world. A gentle animation is constantly welling up in his soul, and diffusing its cheering influence over all his faculties. Such is not the levity of the votary of pleasure. Good health and high spirits will occasionally give him the appearance of cheerfulness; but even the appearance is transient, soon rising to levity, or sinking to despondency. For one hour of giddiness and merriment, he has whole days of languor, restlessness, and disgust. His cheerfulness is the excitement of a convivial night, not the temper of the mind which abides through all nights and all days.

The gayety which pervades the various ranks of fashionable society, arises more from their circumstances than from natural disposition. Surrounded by all the conveniences and luxuries which wealth can procure, and passing their lives in the company of those whose only employment it is to please, they meet with little to sour their humors or to darken their prospects. But, when these gay creatures come down from the flowery heights of ease, as they are sometimes compelled to do, and endure the trials of lowly life, they take leave of their former hilarity, and commune only with melancholy and discontent.

In order to keep the course of cheerfulness, two shoals are to be shunned: a troubled spirit on the one hand, and a merry one on the other. The former prevails when affliction has not the support of a vigorous faith; the latter is indulged by those who

allow cheerfulness to degenerate into mirth. For each of these excesses the apostle has appointed a distinct and effectual remedy. For the one prayers, and for the other psalmody. "Is any afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms."

CHAPTER IV.

GENTLENESS.

GENTLENESS is that union of tenderness of disposition and mildness of manner which invites the timid to confidence and the agitated to ease. It is averse to all turbulence and violence in demeanor, and all harshness and abruptness in speech. It avoids the indiscriminate compliance of the fickle, the mean conformity of the flatterer, and the feeble delicacy of the effeminate, as much as it does the impertinence of the forward, the neglect of the disdainful, and the provocations of the proud. It discloses its charms not by the facility with which it abandons its positions, but by the mildness with which it defends them, not by showing an eagerness to please, or a horror of offending, but by a calm and easy disclosure of a subdued soul.

It is the opinion of some, that a certain bluntness and negligence of manners, are suitable to strict uprightness, and a necessary ally of active piety. They appear to have formed their notions of moral excellence from contemplating the conduct of the Reformers, and other public champions of the church, who, in knocking off the shackles wherewith ignorance and sin had bound mankind, employed no

mild means and no bland manners. But if we would do justice to these defamed but illustrious characters, we ought to consider that they were not in reality so defective in gentleness as they seem to have been; for the fires of persecution brought to view all the dross in their composition, and the malignant scrutiny of the whole world magnified it. That these men were really gentle-hearted, might be shown by an appeal to their conduct in private life, where persons do not conceal their bad qualities, but make an unaffected display of them. Here we find them showing a tender regard for the feelings of others, and attentive to all the amenities of society.

Gentleness is a relative virtue, varying with the occasion for its exercise. What is gentleness in some circumstances, is not so in others. In the conduct of great affairs, in the defence of important rights and principles, in a concern of life and death, or in a question of eternal destiny, it is sometimes commendable to be so earnest as to forget the elegances of demeanor, which are more suited to private than public occasions; they adorn the man rather than the office and the profession.

Those who regard the milder graces as weaknesses, overlook prime qualities in the character of our Divine Pattern. Meekness, lowliness, and love, are the only virtues to which he publicly laid claim. And while he possessed every other perfect grace, he conferred on these the singular honor of admitting to the closest intimacy with himself, the disciple who was most submissive to their gentle empire. The life of our divine Lords was an almost uninterrupted series of gentle actions. With what tender-

ness did he treat the many invalids who everywhere obstructed his path; how mild the means he used to heal them. A kind word often wrought a speedy cure. And where the gentleness of others generally deserts them, there did his appear in its highest perfection. Nowhere was this virtue more conspicuous than when he was dealing with the crimes and infirmities of our fallen nature. Can anything exceed the tenderness of his behavior towards the woman who was dragged before him in the blushing and confusion of conscious guilt. When his hearers refused to believe his messages, he did not upbraid them, but said he came not to judge but to save them.⁶ On the night of his agony and betrayal in the garden, he excused the blamable drowsiness of his disciples by the remark that their souls were willing to watch, but their bodies were weary. He paused amid the mob which sought his life, to heal the ear of his midnight enemy. He reprehended with a benignant look, the disciple who denied Him, and when he had risen, he bid an angel send the tidings of the event especially to the grieving Peter. Nor did he afterwards ever remind him of his defection. "The beloved disciple," who seems ever to have been near his person, and who has recorded many minute incidents of his life, not mentioned by the other Evangelists, has brought out this feature of his character with an inspired and an appreciating hand.

Some of his actions performed in the character of a divine and prophetic person, were not gentle, because gentleness in these instances would have been out of place. There are circumstances in which gen-

⁶ John xii. 47.

tleness is no virtue: such were those in which He assailed the profaners of the temple and stigmatized the Pharisees as hypocrites and vipers. Yet gentleness was undoubtedly a principal trait in his character. Paul, in vindicating his own reputation against the assault of false brethren among the Corinthian believers, says to them, "I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." In his bearing towards his enemies, he resolved to exhibit the gentle and yielding spirit of his lamb-like Lord. Had his divine Master been distinguished for severity, he could not have safely appealed to such tender virtues as he did in this obtestation. He knew that fame had everywhere associated his name with all that is humble and mild. He invoked not the power by which Emmanuel banished disease, rebuked demons, and bid the storm be still, but that virtue which diffused itself over the numberless unrecorded actions of His social life, and shed its balmy fragrance over a miserable world. "The gentleness of Christ!" Let these words evermore be the sacred spell to drive away the spirit of discord among Christians, and to allay the fierceness of their adversaries. Let the believer who is jostled amid the tumult of business pronounce it; let him remember it in the domestic group; let him feel its influence in the intercourse of society, in the assembly of the saints, and in all other transactions of life.

Paul is himself an admirable example of this virtue. The greatest of reformers and suffering more than any other from persecution and adversity, yet gentleness diffuses itself over every feature of his character. It betrays its influence in his spirit, his conduct, his ser-

mons, and his epistles. He did not regard it as inconsistent with zeal and integrity; nor did he fear that this grace would impair his authority over the churches. To the converts of Thessalonica, from whom neither he nor the other apostles might expect to derive any honor from the possession of a flimsy accomplishment, he unites with Silvanus and Timotheus in saying, "We were gentle among you."

The Christian who is not wont to give gentleness that place in his heart and conduct, which as a Christian virtue it justly claims, need not be surprised to meet with some who will be slow to confess he is a worthy disciple of Christ—who will be ready to maintain that their own gentility is more in harmony with the Gospel than his godliness, and affirm that the name of gentleman is better than that of Christian, that, however much of inward gentleness he may profess, it has no charms for them till they behold it embodied in outward conduct. Every Christian who desires to deserve the name, should show a gentle demeanor in all his intercourse with others, where duty does not demand a severe bearing. Such a style of conduct adorns almost every occasion, company, and act of duty. How does a mild tone conciliate us, a soft answer turn away wrath, a gentle address captivate us. How does such a behavior disarm the hostile, discourage the audacious, and restrain even the shameless. What accidents has it not avoided; what insults has it not prevented, what animosities not healed. Gentleness, attentive to whatever can promote our ease and comfort, by a constant succession of silent service, takes captive the heart without taking away its freedom or requiring its servitude.

This virtue shuns all offensive bodily actions, such as needless shuddering, thrusting, jerking, starting, skipping, jumping and running. Although it is sometimes in haste, it is never in a hurry.⁷ It prompts all that is graceful in bodily movements, and, by polishing away all the asperities of demeanor and habit, helps to symmetrize the entire Christian character.

But this virtue cannot be acquired solely by disciplining the body or by cultivating a graceful exterior. It is mentioned in the sacred Oracles among the fruits of the Spirit. It is also declared by the apostle James to be one of the characteristics of spiritual wisdom: "The wisdom that is from above is gentle." Gentleness is best nurtured by subduing the passions, by moderating the desires, by exercising circumspection and watchfulness, meekness and kindness, also by emulating the exemplars of gentleness which are found in the Scriptures and in the various walks of life, by prayer, and especially by invoking the power of the dove-like Spirit.

⁷ This is the substance of one of Lord Chesterfield's precepts. It was a saying of John Wesley as to himself, and is implied in the Latin caution, *Festina lente*.

CHAPTER V.

COURAGE.

THE ability to encounter dangers and difficulties with fearlessness and composure, is a quality as serviceable as it is ornamental to every true knight of the Cross. By the aid of this, he can, as we might say, wrest the sacred summit of Calvary from its profaners, bear away the most precious relics unmolested, and lift them up to the view of all beholders. It saves him from the bitter, but unavailing regrets of those who for the want of it look back on opportunities unimproved, duties omitted, and good unaccomplished. It also saves him from the doubts which such neglects suggest, the want of courage being justly considered indicative of the absence of higher Christian virtues.

Courage is not, as some suppose, inimical to courtesy. Martial courage has often been coupled with the most refined and benevolent sentiments; and numerous instances might be adduced in which moral courage is happily united with the same feelings. It is confessed there are some Christians who are as gentle and affable as they are lukewarm and inactive. Yet there are many who are lovely in action as well as repose. They are equally meek and zealous.

Their garments are like those of Immanuel when he was transfigured ; they are not only "white," but "glistening." Their character is not only unsullied by faults, but emblazoned with deeds of pious heroism.

A share of humble confidence is absolutely requisite to a courteous deportment. Mr. Fearkirk has a sort of religious bashfulness. He is not at home in the house of God. He seems to fancy himself to be either the attractor of all eyes, or the butt of common ridicule. When he enters the place of worship he hurries to his pew, that he may be relieved from the pain of being seen, but he is so eager to get into it that he diverts the thoughts of many from God to himself. When presented at the pew of another, he is so anxious to be speedily seated, that he cannot allow others to make way for him ; and when a person is brought to his own pew door, he starts up as if frightened at an apparition. In a word, he is so restless and disconcerted during the services, that he derives from them little profit, and no enjoyment. He can sing melodiously when he supposes nobody is listening, but in public he never ventures to give the key-note, and will seldom sing, even when he has a choir to support him. His voice is so rarely heard in the prayer-meeting that he seems a stranger there, and his consciousness it is so, seems but to increase his embarrassment. He utters his prayers either in a low tremulous tone, apparently more dreading man than worshipping God ; or in a very high tone, as if he would overcome his fears by the noise of his voice. He is ill at ease even in the domestic circle, particularly at the time of the morning and evening

sacrifice. He omits the services of the family altar for fear of his wife, his children, his servants, or strangers. As for conversing with his children or his acquaintances on the subject of religion, he dares not entertain the thought.

Mr. Dreadcourt is equally afraid to do his duty to God and his duty to man. For he who can break the first table of the law can as easily break the second. He fears to discharge all his minor obligations. His bashfulness makes him awkward in all his demeanor; he can hardly salute his intimate friends, and he exchanges common civilities much to his confusion. Of the many kind and agreeable usages of society, he observes very few, and these with extreme reluctance. He is as seemingly inconsistent in secular matters as Mr. Fearkirk is in sacred: for he sometimes endeavors to hide his fears under a bold and haughty air. His timidity now causes failures, and now leads to excesses, so that he is always vibrating between coyness and audacity.

A Christian of high moral courage is collected and at ease in all situations. He as easily maintains his self-possession in the presence of a prince as before a beggar; he can pursue a holy object as steadily in public as in private. He performs the daily offices of religion as though they were the business of life; he as fearlessly engages in the public worship of Jehovah as if he had been disciplined for the service among choirs of seraphim.

The vital principle of moral courage is Christian love. There may be martial bravery, hypocritical hardihood, and physical fortitude, without a single spark of this celestial element. But when the real

believer lacks the intrepidity needful to the performance of his peculiar duties, he may reasonably suspect that he wants more of this emboldening passion : “for perfect love casteth out fear.” Nevertheless, should he find his courage equal to every occasion, he ought not to conclude it to be the effect of charity unless he is unable to attribute it to some other cause.

CHAPTER VI.

MEEKNESS.

MEEKNESS is that temper of the Christian which enables him calmly to suffer injuries with good-will towards the injurer. It is sometimes thought to be a virtue which adorns the victim of extreme oppression, abuse, and wrong; but it equally becomes wounded pride, violated propriety, and injured kindness. All along his thorny way the Christian meets with many lesser trials of this virtue which, though small in themselves, it is more difficult to endure with composure than those of greater magnitude. The philosopher who is able to receive with much coolness the visitations of sickness and death, is extremely disturbed by injustice and unkindness, impertinence and neglect. He finds it easier to exercise meekness under great and inevitable calamities than under small and wanton discourtesies.

He who will not notice an insult may be either very proud or very wise; but he who cannot receive one with placid composure, smarting under it, or resenting it, has need of meekness. In some cases it is proper, after deliberation and delay, to request of the offender an explanation: commonly, however, it is injudicious to show that we regard ourselves injured by affronts. We would very seldom resent the

provocations of some persons, did we reflect that they were not actuated by personal hatred, but were the results of habitual discourtesy, or ignorance of the usages of society. It would save us much disquiet in life were we to practise this rule—always to submit cheerfully to the unkindness of others, but never to give them occasion to endure our own.

Christian meekness does not take it upon itself to avenge personal insults and wrongs. When, however, they are willful violations of human rights, our duty to ourselves, as well as to the law of the land, may require us to expose them to legal penalties. Even in such cases an individual may not avenge his own wrongs. In every instance, except in that of dangerous personal violence, he should, during the act, serenely submit to abuse and injustice, and after the act he ought not to assume the responsibility of punishing the offence, either by word or deed. When his enemy smites him on one cheek, meekness requires him to turn the other also, and for personal abuse to return acts of kindness. The intercourse of the world, and that of Christians, are governed by different laws. The former is controlled by what are termed the laws of honor, for the violation of which the offended party may avenge himself by attempting to take the life of the offender at the peril of his own. The latter is regulated by the laws of courtesy, which require the aggressor to make no other amends to the aggrieved, than to witness in his conduct an example of injured meekness, and to render no other satisfaction to those violated laws, than to behold the person he has injured nobly obeying the statutes he had wantonly violated.

The meek man does not, however, lie down in sullen inactivity under abuses that may be reformed by a little address, or by a pleasant hint. At the same time, whoever undertakes to call the attention of another to an impropriety he has committed, should by his manner avoid committing another and a greater. It is easy to drag into light some slight solecism of another, in such a way as to betray a self-conceit more offensive than the grossest act of vulgarity. To correct a bad habit of another, or to discover to him a fault without any unpleasantness of manner, is one of the best attainments of meekness. In one of our western cities, a Roman priest lately knocked off the hat of a man who refused to make him a bow. And who does not every day witness good-humored mistakes corrected by petulant rebukes, and a breach of etiquette mended by a breach of the decalogue.

The countryman and the citizen should be meek in their bearing towards each other. The former should always be ready to excuse what may seem to him extravagance and affectation ; the latter what may appear to him parsimony and vulgarity, not hastily concluding that people lack a refined taste, when they only want the means of gratifying it, or when they are careful to order their expenditures agreeably to the dictates of conscience, and the calls of benevolence, rather than the laws of refinement or the freaks of fashion. When he goes to a city, the countryman should, as much as is convenient, conform to the usages of those who are artificial in their habits of life, considering that improprieties occasion more disquiet in the town than in the country. The citizen should avoid every needless display of his city

graces before country people, should not be forward to condemn what is local and natural, or to praise what is foreign and artificial, and should adopt, as far as a strict adherence to the rules of courtesy will allow, the plain and artless usages of rural life. He ought never to attempt to make it appear that he is refined, and the countryman rude. By such conduct he will invariably discover to well-bred country people the emptiness of his pretensions. The courteous Christian will everywhere endure with patience the improprieties of the uncouth, and when he meets with men of great talents, but of a defective sense of propriety, men of many virtues, but few ideas of refinement, women of some beauty, but little delicacy, and people of right intentions, but rough actions, by his gentle and humane conduct he will hide his own knowledge and their ignorance, and the chief display he will make of his own virtues will be in concealing their faults.

In his intercourse with his brethren, the Christian should let meekness have her perfect work. Apathy and forwardness, fanaticism and hypocrisy, pretension and timidity, impropriety and fastidiousness, will each and sometimes all together test the strength of this grace. In a religious body composed of members of every capacity, culture, and grade, who are to worship and deliberate in concert, unless this virtue be constantly exercised, the bond of brotherhood will be severed, and the cause of the Gospel be dishonored by uncharitable criminations, and noisy contentions. The Christian warrior may shed a tear over a disgraced comrade, but he may not despise the court martial that tried and condemned him.

The safety of the army may sometimes require his retreat in the hour of conflict, but it is always dishonored if he desert. He who turns away offended with the disagreements of his brethren, neglects rare opportunities of self-discipline, and of showing his devotion to his Master. He who has the charity that "endureth all things," does not forsake his post in the hour of danger or hardship. But content to be exposed to the shots of the enemy, he fortifies himself with the words of the prophet: "Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it." If he cannot always suffer for Christ's sake, he always suffers in His spirit. He prefers the honor of his Redeemer to his own, and for the sake of the Christian cause, is willing to suffer in silence and neglect. "The Macedonian boy," observes Jeremy Taylor, "that kept the coal in his flesh, and would not shake his arm lest he should disturb the sacrifice, or discompose the ministry before Alexander the Great, concealed his pain to the honor of patience and religion."

We always meekly bear the imperfection of those whom we love. When, therefore, we find ourselves indulging an impatient spirit toward our brethren, we may justly accuse ourselves of a deficiency of brotherly love. The world is full of illustrations of the meekness which affection exercises towards its object, and the divine testimonies furnish the most sublime instances of the meekness of Christian love. From St. Paul's inspired description of Charity, it would seem as if he deemed meekness her ruling virtue. His pen lingers upon it with an amplification that scarcely escapes tautology. Yet the character he sketched was not an imaginary one.

His model was the Incarnation of divine Love, whose meekness had been long before the burden of prophecy, and was so transplendent in his life, that He alone of all beings, hazarded nothing by proclaiming it with his own lips.

CHAPTER VII.

SENSIBILITY.

THE man of real sensibility is not so much affected with the corruptions as with the miseries of humanity. He firmly believes the doctrine of total depravity ; at the same time he loves to contemplate whatever is amiable in our fallen nature although it cannot abide the test of the Holy One. Some take a vicious pleasure in pronouncing cold and illiberal criticisms on the frailties of their fellow-worms. Fancying their minds to be furnished with a correct moral sense, a refined taste and accurate notions of propriety, they busy themselves in uttering anathemas against the character and deeds of others. A few moments devoted to self-inspection, would convince them that their minds are, in reality, little better than crucibles, which they have rendered nauseous by analyzing in them the worst elements in human nature. The man of sensibility is known not by spleen, but by fineness of feeling. He has that charity which *covereth*^s all things, and “thinketh no evil.” To expose and inflame the leprosy of the soul, is no part of his task. He exerts all his skill in hiding and healing it.

^s 1 Cor. 13 : 7. The verb στέγω, translated “beareth,” means to *cover, hide, shelter.*

Christian sensibility is that quality of the soul which renders it easily susceptible of salutary impressions. When highly cultivated it is quickly and deeply affected with pleasure or pain, by exhibitions of the beauties and deformities of nature and art, of right and wrong, of propriety and impropriety. But there is nothing so much shocks it as the deformity of vice and error, or so much delights it as the comeliness of virtue and truth.

This feeling is excited in proportion to the importance of the object which appeals to it. Hence it may be agitated in seeming security, and calm in seeming peril; for there is often more injury to be apprehended from the former than the latter. It is not transported with joy over a found trinket, while it is incapable of trembling for an endangered soul or mourning for a lost one. The children of pleasure have an extreme tenderness on subjects of little consequence, and an entire insensibility on those of infinite concern. They can bedew with tears untold volumes describing scenes of ideal suffering, but have no compassion for real misery. They are thrown into paroxysms if they happen to commit an impropriety, yet they do not scruple to herd with the paragons of vice. They are thrown into great commotion by some trifling accident—something that disappoints their expectations or opposes their desires; but when sick of pleasure, they can cut their throats or blow out their brains with entire calmness. After a life of moral stupor they plunge into the bottomless gulf, with something of the recklessness with which Satan is described as having done before them, exclaiming,

“Hail, horror ! hail,
Infernal world ! and thou, profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor.”

If ever the Christian finds his sensibility unequal to the occasion for it, he should not attempt to supply the deficiency by an affectation of it. An honest man will prefer being destitute of some one of the virtues, to substituting a counterfeit in the place of a sterling virtue. Some who are unwilling to cherish those graces whence alone this virtue springs, in the hour of need grasp after it in vain. They abound in frigid raptures and hollow exclamations, affecting more feeling than would be suitable to persons of ardent piety, and attempting to conceal the want of feeling under extravagant expressions of it. Others, not unlike these, affect superior refinement and taste, but are frequently found to be glaringly defective in these qualities. The expression of their inclinations and aversions are strong and unqualified. They so often complain of taste violated, modesty shocked, and politeness outraged, that it requires patience herself to listen to them. The fabulous mole that expressed great surprise at the assaults made on his senses by strange odors, sounds, and sights, was chided by his dam with the remark that, if he would have people allow him any sense at all, he should not affect more than nature had given him.

A pious sensibility sympathizes with all the justifiable joys and sorrows of others. It can “rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Some pretend to be little disturbed by all the vicissitudes and events that affect the spirit in this its gossamer tabernacle. But they have not the

heart of Christ. He could weep alike over a reprobate city and the grave of his friend. He did not refrain from expressing his agony, either in the retirement of Gethsemane or before the crowd on Golgotha. Nor did he turn scornfully away from the allowable festivities of men. Behold him at the marriage of Cana, and at the dinner of the publicans. His susceptible soul easily vibrated at the touch of joy and sorrow. His conduct was neither stoical nor bigoted. When the sanctimonious Pharisees and the austere disciples of John asked him, saying, "Why do we fast oft; but thy disciples fast not?" He replied, "Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?" showing them by an appeal to their own sense of propriety the incongruity of sadness at a wedding. Such is his sympathy with his disciples that they can have no good or ill which he does not feel. So intimate is his connection with the church that he who harms her, crucifies him afresh; and he who intentionally wounds the heart of any member of his mystical body, pierces again his side with the spear; whatever is done to His little ones is done to Him. Let us always be able to make His language our own; "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me:" let our tears be ever mingled with those of our brethren, and let their smiles ever kindle ours.

That code of manners, too widely prevalent, which forbids men to betray the slightest emotion in public, while it should be observed, on some occasions, ought not to be regarded in a religious assembly. This courtly frigidity is destructive to the soul, and

has long seriously hindered the progress of evangelical principles among the fashionable classes of society. No Christian can safely assume the deportment of the stately worldling, who while the assembly is moved beneath the voice of God and the power of the Divine Spirit, sits with a heart untouched with sympathy, and a countenance unenlivened with truth, and though in the presence of God and man, seems proudly to renounce the society of both. When the Christian goes to the house of God, he professes to render to Him the outward expression of a devotional soul. But what is his professed worship except a lifeless form, when he suppresses in his bosom every holy feeling? Take away from primitive piety the hearty and fearless manner which invested its actions, and it would be scarcely better than the exterior accomplishments of the courtier. It would be evangelical piety no more. Had the elders of Ephesus, when taking a final leave of Paul, withheld their tears, and refrained from embraces and kisses, their cold civility and feigned dignity might have recommended them to modern good-breeding, but they would have denied to all succeeding generations a scene in which brotherly love discloses her own celestial majesty and tenderness.

CHAPTER VIII.

DELICACY.

THE secret of the art of pleasing lies chiefly in a constant attention to small, and often indescribable things. The minor graces of behavior are like certain powders which, though composed of particles so light that a slight whiff blows them away, can polish a metallic surface to the highest brilliancy. By removing the asperities of individuals, they take away the impediments in the machinery of society, and make it run without noise and self-destruction. Most persons are more easily offended by trifles, than by matters of consequence. A slight neglect, a petty provocation, or a trifling accident fills them with confusion, or convulses them with rage. They think their reputation is concerned in serenely suffering great evils, and fear they would be charged with insensibility and want of spirit, did they not fret under small ones.

These flaws of passion it is the office of delicacy either to prevent or remove; for it is that quality of a benevolent mind and a courteous behavior which consists in a quick sense of whatever gives pleasure or pain, united with a minute observance of all those little things which promote the one and prevent the other. This virtue has often been confounded with

sensibility, which keenly feels pleasure or pain, and sympathizes with the feelings of others; also with that sensitiveness which, while it does not shun giving pain to others, is hurt by the slightest inattention from them. Nor is delicacy synonymous with fastidiousness. It is not appalled at the sight of a boot or an ungloved hand; it does not faint at a slip of the tongue or a breach of etiquette. It does not stand aloof from a man because his coat is of coarse materials, ill-shapen, or awkwardly worn. Delicacy is a nice and intuitive perception of the disposition and condition of another, with the view of administering to his happiness. It enjoys the pleasure it gives rather than the pleasure it receives, and is more pained by an injury done another, than by one inflicted on itself. It is something more than a scrupulous attention to all the punctilios of politeness. For one may indirectly shock tender sensibilities, rebuke good intentions, mortify the ignorant, intimidate the bashful, slight the poor, deceive the unsuspecting, and do many other injuries which delicacy could never commit, all in obedience to the received laws of politeness. Delicacy does indeed regard every suggestion of true elegance, but it extends its influence far beyond them, and prevents abuses which the most explicit rules cannot reach. As the attendant of charity, it refines her perceptions, diffuses her favors, and discovers to her countless objects of beneficence, which she would otherwise have overlooked, and guides her in the performance of her minutest duties.

The duty of delicacy is implied in several parts of the sacred Oracle, as, "A bruised reed shall he not

break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted." "Be kindly affectioned one toward another." As a virtue, it was practised by St. Paul, who says of himself: "I please all men in all things."

Some suppose this quality, being so attentive to little things, is the mark of a narrow and trifling spirit. On the contrary, it is seldom found in any other than generous and capacious souls. Since every great subject is composed of details, he who lacks the nice perceptions requisite to examine those details, cannot form an accurate judgment with respect to it. It is a characteristic of great minds, that they easily perceive those small, yet important objects, facts, and incidents, which common minds are slow to discover. Lord Bacon affirms that he who cannot contract his mind as well as dilate it, wants a great talent in life. It shows the infinite capacity no less than the benevolent condescension of the divine Mind, that it is as attentive to the fire-fly which lights up only a bed of flowers, as to the star that twinkles for the universe.

Nor has the great God shown this attribute in his providence alone. As Immanuel, the God with man, his precepts and example taught his disciples to condescend to the most lowly acts of kindness. When he was about to return to the eternal throne, and to resume the sceptre of universal empire, he took a towel and girded himself, and washed his disciples' feet. Thus does he impress upon the minds of his followers, especially the more distinguished of them, that they should not disdain to perform any service, however humble and mean, but cheerfully stoop to

every attention which delicacy can suggest. And the Lord of all was not insensible to any neglect or observance of the civilities due to himself. When the penitent woman showed him those marks of respect and friendship which Simon the Pharisee had neglected, he vindicated her conduct while he rebuked his host for withholding from him those attentions which it was customary to pay to guests. "He turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman since the time that I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment." After he had by washing his disciples' feet, taught them the duty of kind condescension, he said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Happy indeed are those disciples of Christ who are never superior to the humblest minutiae of charity. And bad as the times are, we are not wanting in attractive examples of this virtue. The late Dr. Cornelius was, as his biographer informs us, "remarkably attentive to the little wants and wishes of his friends. He did not reserve his kindness for great occasions. A person looking back on a week in which he had been in his society, could hardly reckon the number of attentions which he had received from him. This manifestation of interest in another's welfare was not designed to awaken gratitude towards himself, or to requite the favors which had been shown him, but they were the spontaneous product of a heart which

rejoiced in the happiness of man. This trait of character was as apparent in regard to total strangers as in respect to others. In a stage-coach or steamboat, he was ever consulting the convenience of his fellow-passengers. However humble their circumstances, he was accustomed, with the utmost cheerfulness, to give up his own accommodations, no matter how fully entitled to them, accompanying the surrender of his right with some pleasant observation, which won the good-will of all those who were present. No one, perhaps, was more successful in securing the remembrance and respect of the agents of stage-coach companies, and other employers, about our public conveyances. On this account it was a privilege to have his company in a journey, as the esteem which he won for himself was extended to his associates.

His manner of performing an act of kindness could not have been better chosen if he had accurately analyzed the laws of the human mind which regulate the intercourse of friendship. He delighted to witness the happiness which an unexpected favor produced. He made use of those little artifices of affection, which sometimes produce the most permanent effects, because they show that the kindness was premeditated, and therefore came from the heart, which was *consulting* for another's benefit."

This was a conspicuous trait in the character of the late Dr. Neander. We might add the names of other great souls, were they not as yet kept back from the skies, to be ennobling patterns to mortals.

The son of Sirach declares that "he who contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little."

Let a person neglect those little acts of kindness on which friendship necessarily subsists, and he will gradually alienate from himself all his friends. A cheerful endurance of an idle whim, a silly custom, or a capricious fashion has prevented many jealousies and quarrels, while, on the other hand, an open scorn of these matters has made many an one as uncouth and snarling as a Diogenes. A single violation of tender felings, when considered apart, may not be very displeasing, yet when received as preparing the way for a long train of them, it may be intolerable. So a single instance of delicacy might be scarcely worthy of observation, did it not furnish a clue to the character, and stand as a kind of tacit promise of numberless others like the first.

Why is it that the conversation of some persons looses us from all painful restraints, drives away all anxiety, leaves us at ease, and diffuses over our souls a serene and lasting pleasure? Is it not because the services of delicacy are constantly repeated, until, by blending in our minds the fruition, the remembrance, and the anticipation of themselves, they form sources of pure and varied delight? The maxim of the son of Sirach is applicable to all ranks of society. By disregarding it, the lowest is made somewhat lower, and the highest sinks to the level of the lowest. The great, especially, cannot afford to neglect what is small in manners. "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor : so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor."¹⁰ He who esteems himself above the petty usages of society, renders himself

¹⁰ Eccles. 10 : 1.

more insignificant than the things he despises. Men naturally desire to make him little, who affects to disdain their own littleness. Said Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boswell: "There is nothing, sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain to the great art of having as little misery as possible, and as much happiness as possible."

The Christian can ill afford to practise the greater duties of charity, to the neglect of the lesser. Some benevolent persons can cheerfully, as they ought to do, part with their coin, in order to increase the happiness of those who live in distant parts of the earth, but find it hard to diffuse the soft influences of kindness in general society, in their own neighborhood, among their friends and brethren, in the social circle and at the domestic fireside. They are benevolent, but they are not courteous. Some will lavish their liberalities on people, and then abuse them. But the most active generosity cannot make amends for small acts of unkindness. Few easily recover from an insult offered them by their benefactors. The omission of a single attention which delicacy would have suggested, has stifled sentiments of gratitude, which it required a long-practised benevolence to inspire. Let no one imagine that the amount of his charities will be deemed a sufficient apology for trifling with the finer feelings of those whom Providence has made dependent on his charities. Nor let any suppose that to be a more elevated benevolence, which shows itself in generosity and public spirit, than that which appears in uniform delicacy of manners. Those who pray for the advancement of con-

sistent piety will count the latter the silent, mighty, far-spread dews that descend on the mountains of Zion, and the former the noisy, narrow, vernal torrents that vaingloriously dash over their cliffs. What is it that a man is a patron of all the benevolent societies ; what is it that the glow of his gold gleams athwart the shades of eastern jungles and western wildernesses, lights up the dark islands of ocean, and melts the frozen poles, if he habitually despise the nameless little charities of life, if he be wont to chill the domestic hearth, and the hearts of his brethren and neighbors with a blunt, morose, and disobliging behavior ? In confirmation of these views the eye of the reader is directed to an admired leaf in the unfading chaplet of Mrs. Hannah More.

“ Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs ;
Since life’s best joys consist in peace and ease,
And few can stand and serve, but all may please :
Oh let the ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence.
To spread large bounties though we wish in vain,
Yet all may shun the guilt of giving pain.”

Fidelity in little matters is the surest test of Christian character. A small favor to a stranger, a gentle action to a relation, or a kind word to a servant, is not likely to be dictated by motives of ambition. The accommodating services and pacifying forbearances of obscure life which can never be published to the world ; or, if published, could not gain renown, are not prompted by a thirst for applause. How much meaning is there in those words of our Divine Master, “ He that is faithful in the least is faithful also in much.”

But, at the same time, it is painful to admit that there are professors who appear to find exquisite gratification in observing the customs of propriety, civility, and hospitality, while they answer the calls of general benevolence with manifest reluctance. Covetousness, even niggardness is quite consistent with an exterior politeness. The Pharisees loved greetings in the market-places as much as they did to devour widows' houses. Of the three texts which give us any clue to the character of Demas, one conveys his greetings to the disciples at Colosse, the other to Philemon, and the other describes him as loving this present world, forsaking Paul and going to Thessalonica.

Such instances are exceeding few among decided Christians. The Christ-like man is in no danger of confining his benevolence to mere compliments, or of exhausting it on the laudable services of courtesy. The illuminating truths of divine revelation; his moral state and progress; the numerous temptations of life; its heavy duties; and above all, a love which is serving his God, and the spiritual interests of his brother, his neighbor, and the alien—these so fill the soul of the Christian that he would fain excuse himself from the inferior engagements of society; from administering to the mere temporal enjoyments of men; and from spending his working-day in the amenities of friendship and the civilities of the idle world. He is wise in refusing to devote his life to the mere amusement of his perishing fellows: but while on the other hand his great and compassionate soul embraces the universal race, let it not forget the individual; and as he looks up with eager eyes to the glories

of another world, let him not be heedless of his behavior in his intercourse with this; otherwise, his folly will be but feebly illustrated by that of Thales, the old Greek astronomer, who was so absorbed in contemplation of the stars, that he wandered from his way and stumbled into a well.

CHAPTER IX.

PROPRIETY.

“CHARITY,” says the apostle Paul, “doth not behave itself unseemly.” Her very nature justifies this sacred declaration. She ever instinctively aims to make others happy by consulting whatever is becoming. Impropriety of speech or of behavior is offensive, and consequently cannot be the dictates of this grace who is herself all comeliness and benignity, and inspires in others just notions of the suitable and the pleasing. Nor is it hazarding anything to say that true decorum will be studied and practised by mankind in proportion as they are actuated by her spirit.

The sacred Oracles address not only the conscience, but the sense of propriety. They everywhere speak to man of a being who has the faculty of discerning, and relishing whatever is becoming, beautiful, and graceful. They also aim to refine this faculty, by furnishing it with numerous lessons and examples of meet and comely behavior. More especially do they set forth the kind of conduct which is suitable to Christians, as, “Holiness *becometh* thy house, O Lord, forever.” “Praise *becometh* the upright.” St. Paul directs the Roman believers to observe the rites of

hospitality according to the dictates of Christian decorum: "I commend unto you, Phebe, our sister. . . that ye receive her in the Lord as *becometh* saints." He also addresses Timothy to exhort women to adorn themselves with good works: "as *becometh* women professing godliness;" and Titus to entreat aged women to behave "as *becometh* holiness." These commands make it the duty of the Christian to cultivate the highest kind of propriety, and to practise a style of conduct peculiarly adapted to his holy character. It is not sufficient that his manners be such as befits the man of the world: they must be such as befits the Christian. A deportment which is suitable to the worldling is in general very unsuitable to him.

This duty requires the Christian to maintain propriety in the entire drift and course of his conduct. The exhortation of the apostle is, "Let us *walk* decently," by which he means that the tenor of our conduct should be regulated by a just sense of propriety. He would have us act as besorts us not merely in the public assembly or in the social party, but also in the sphere of our domestic duties. He who would gain or preserve a character for propriety should regard its dictates as well in private as in public; for he who studies the decencies of behavior on public occasions alone, when he ought to have nothing to do but to practise them, cannot comport himself courteously anywhere. Nor may this precept be construed as applying exclusively to a certain period of life. It does not require youth to be modest, obliging, and deferential; and yet allow middle age to be indelicate, selfish, and rude; and old age to be slovenly, petulant, and arrogant. It

requires us perpetually to improve in propriety of manners from the cradle to the grave.

The obligations of propriety extend yet further. They reach the minutest action. Whether we perform a deed which attracts public attention, or one that is noticed only by a few, or which passes entirely unobserved, we are bound to do it with propriety. The command, "Let all things be done decently," is of constant and universal application. Many precepts may be executed before or after others, but this should be performed simultaneously with every other. The duty of propriety wraps itself round each other duty. This is the sacred fire upon the altar of the mind which should burn continually, gild with its blaze every sacrifice, and cast its light on every service.

Our sense of the befitting needs to be ever active, that we may behave, not only as becomes a Christian, but also as becomes our own peculiar situation. Each age, sex, and condition has its characteristic deportment, and this again is to be modified according to circumstances. The same conduct is not alike proper or improper in an old and in a young person, in a man and in a woman, in a member of one profession and in that of another, in a public and in a private person, in one of a higher and in one of a lower rank in society. Then each one, after determining what conduct fitly belongs to his general character, his station, and the like, must know how to shape his behavior to casual conditions of person, time, and place.

Decorum and virtue are so near akin that it is easier to perceive the difference between them, than

to explain it." Thus much may be said by way of distinction, that every virtuous action is decorous, but every decorous action is not virtuous. Not only should every action be performed agreeably to the sense of moral right, but it should also be performed agreeably to the sense of propriety. Conduct which is improper may be morally wrong, and that which is proper may be morally right; the faculty of propriety and that of conscience can both judge of the same act. If they agree in all their decisions, both are to be considered equally cultivated or neglected, if they disagree, one, if not both, is morally disordered. The sense of propriety, however, has a more minute and extensive control over the conduct of most men than conscience. It directs their actions where, from some defect of conscience, they would not be able to decide by a reference to the latter. But a person of cultivated conscience, after having performed an act dictated by propriety, will upon a review of the action generally find it to be approved by the moral sense also. Likewise when he has violated the sense of propriety, it inflicts upon him a sting not unlike the compunctions of conscience; and when he comes to be sensible that he has also disobeyed the laws of conscience, he suffers their penalties along with those of the broken statutes of propriety.

In the minds of some Christians these faculties act in admirable harmony; in most men of the world the sense of propriety is at variance with the sense of right, and is irregular in its decisions. The sense of propriety is often divorced from the moral sense for

¹¹ Cicero de Officiis, L. 1. c. xxxvii.

the crime of prostituting itself to the arbitrary usages of society, which, as they are sometimes wrong, they must be sometimes improper. By an unscrupulous compliance with whatever fashion or usage sanctions, the sense of propriety ceases to decide for itself the quality of actions, and refuses to submit them to the judgment of conscience. All ideas of propriety and right being thus confounded, or at least neglected, the sense of the becoming and the sense of right are equally corrupted. No sooner is virtue exchanged for vice than refinement degenerates into coarseness. Those therefore who denounce the moral virtues, do in the same breath virtually deny propriety. Those who are as proud of their gentility as they are of their ungodliness, are their own dupes; for did they understand their own nature, they would know that just so far as their hearts are vicious, must the sense of propriety be corrupted—that every act which violates the conscience also violates the sense of the becoming, and that by disqualifying themselves for the society of angels they are at the same time unfitting themselves for the society of men.

There are those who suppose it to be the tendency of the sacred Scriptures to vitiate our ideas of the becoming, and to set at naught all refinement. But let none imagine that the oracles of God anywhere encourage the slightest impropriety. All the ordinances and rites of the Patriarchal, the Levitical, and the Christian dispensations conform to the principles of true fitness, as well as the laws of just taste. And if any of the sacred characters ever betray a defective sense of propriety, it ought not to be laid to the charge of their religion, but to their departures from its require-

ments. The holy writings abound with precepts and instances of propriety. Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and the only man whom the Just One deemed deserving to be the father of the races which were to repeople the purified earth, has given to his posterity the most signal proof of the importance he attached to the observances of propriety even toward the drunken. By delicately regarding them, Shem and Japheth procured their father's blessing, became, in their descendants, the inheritors of the fairest portion of the earth, and the rulers of the rest of mankind. By wantonly disregarding them, Ham received in his offspring the paternal curse. For this, his son Canaan and his descendants were doomed either to servitude or extermination, while his other sons received their inheritance in desert regions, and were sentenced to be the slaves of their more refined brethren. And to this day the posterity of Ham, degraded at home and enslaved abroad—Heaven hates the oppressor—continue to suffer as they have done for thousands of years, the consequences of a single act of impropriety.

CHAPTER X.

SINCERITY.

A BEHAVIOR marked by simplicity, always becomes the child of God. The Divine Master bid his disciples admire the guileless Israelite, and regard the openness of his conduct as the best mark of his high birth. Nothing has more of moral beauty and gracefulness than the unstudied manifestation in deportment of a soul at once luminous and pure. For such a spirit to disguise its qualities were to conceal its charms. Innocence needs no covering. The Grecians used to represent the graces unclothed, to signify that artlessness and candor are requisite to pleasing manners.

Sincerity requires our words and actions not to misrepresent our thoughts and designs. Propriety sometimes leads us to confine in our own breasts our purposes and feelings; but sincerity demands that, when we profess to declare them, we should really do so.

The gay world is satisfied with a pleasing exterior, and acts on the principle that we are not accountable for our manners. Hence their code of politeness violates the plainest principles of morality. They attempt to justify it by maintaining that there

is no living in the world without such regulations—that it is our duty to please, at all hazards, and that it were contemptible to make such trifles matters of conscience. Their concern is not whether an action be right, but whether it be gracefully performed; not whether a remark be true, but whether it be elegantly expressed. But manners can never be divorced from morals; and although these persons may think it degrading their dignity to attach a moral quality to every action, the great God does not deem it unworthy his infinite majesty to preserve a record of each vicious thought and idle word, and to present it in evidence before the Supreme Court of the Universe.

Since men commonly form their estimate of one's character from his manners, and since manners consist much in appearances, those who are anxious to preserve their place in the good opinion of others, are tempted to exhibit the symbol when they cannot show the substance. Numbers are content with the reputation of virtue, without giving themselves the trouble of deserving it. They take the greatest pains to disguise a bad heart, but make no efforts to acquire a good one. But perfectly to conceal a vicious character is beyond the power of human ingenuity; the cloak of hypocrisy betrays the wearer by its own scantiness. Were it possible to master all the mysteries in the art of deception, it would be easier to procure honesty of heart and simplicity of behavior, than long to conceal from others our real character, or to impose on them a false one.

Sincerity embellishes every virtuous action. As the blood which gives life and beauty to the count-

enance springs out of the heart, so every true charm of deportment is supplied from the soul, and it is the more winning because its origin is not obscure. Ill-timed and ill-placed actions are seldom repulsive when they are recommended by honesty and frankness.

It must be owned, however, that outward actions are at best but imperfect indications of the interior virtues of a soul, which is the honored abode of the Holy Spirit. They can never tell of the large desires of such a soul for the well-being of others which it has not the means to gratify. They cannot do justice to the love and solicitude that are even alive in the breast, but are forbidden to disclose themselves, except on rare occasions. Every virtue has its time, place, and object, and cannot be expected to exert itself to all, at all times and in all places. How often have we come unexpectedly upon an excellence in the character of our neighbors, which had long lay concealed from us, and have brought to light a vein of gold where we were only looking for solid rock; and, as we cannot judge from the edge of such a vein, how far and wide it extends, so we can divine but vaguely from the words and actions of the most open-minded man, how deeply seated are the pious habits, how enlightened the principles, and how glorious the hopes that are in some sort embedded in the hidden layers of his soul.

Of the various hypocrisies practised by the world, the imitation of Christian courtesy, with a view to disguise their selfish feelings, and to render themselves agreeable to one another, is undoubtedly the

least pernicious. Where there is guilt, there will be concealment. There are many vicious acts which, if we cannot hinder men from performing, we ought at least to induce them to conceal. The most corrupt are not so lost to a sense of propriety as to run an open career of vice, even where they have nothing to fear from detection. It would be an attempt on the peace and security of every social circle, to advise ungodly natures to dispense with that politeness which throws an elegant exterior over the corruptions of the heart, and to appear before all hearts just as they are. The disguises of men are not so blamable as the vices which render them necessary. When we fail to lead people to courtesy, we shall gain something if we can conduct them to politeness. When the Creator could no longer preserve the innocence of our first parents, in mercy toward their shame he made for them garments. The politeness of the world, by the commendable services in which it sometimes engages, shows that it proceeds from one of the loveliest and least marred features in the broken image of God. Those heathens, the children of Heth, were very generous and respectful in their dealings with Abraham. The young man of fortune who came to Jesus asking, what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life, was frank and amiable. Julius and Publius, though probably not Christians, for their humane and hospitable attentions to St. Paul and his companions, obtained complimentary mention in the narrative of apostolic deeds.

Still, much of the politeness of the world is faulty, not so much because it covers the corruption of the

soul, as because it gives to it an attractive lustre. Many of its observances seem to recommend flattery and deceit, as well as protect crime and irreligion. Debasing as these customs are, the votaries of fashion to whose condition they are adapted, look upon them as valuable, since they minister to the pleasures, and, as they suppose, preserve the harmony of their circles. Although they are mere refined hypocrisies, these persons practise them with all the boldness of conscious innocence, and all the eagerness of increasing delight. By mutually concealing their faults, they become tolerable to one another. They like each other better in masks, than when dressed in character. Their very recreations are but games of deception, and reciprocations of fraud. "They sport themselves with their own deceivings."

The vice most directly opposed to sincerity, is dissimulation. The least tincture of it in the mind, tarnishes the simplicity of the manners, and diffuses a dark and mysterious hue over all the character. Dissimulation, in some form or other, widely prevails in the world, and numbers who dare not practise it in matters of religion, unscrupulously use it in the circles of society, and the marts of business. But whether it serves as a cloak to cover a plot against the altars of religion, the confidence of a friend, or the purse of a neighbor, it is alike wicked and detestable. Dissimulation, however, ought to be distinguished from that secrecy which is observed from kind intentions, and does not mislead any one. To conceal benevolent designs under a countenance that does not deceive is not to practise,

“ . . smooth dissimulation, skilled to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face ”

It is a notion which has long been current in the world, that a certain degree of dissimulation is absolutely requisite to rank and authority. When Louis IX. King of France was asked whether his son, the dauphin, should learn Latin, he replied; “ All the Latin necessary for him to know, is the phrase, ‘ *Qui nescit dissimulare, nescit regnare.* ’ ”¹² A weak and vicious prince may hold the homage of his people by hiding his real designs under feints of wisdom or virtue; but no sovereign worthy a crown ever sought by false appearances to cover either his character or his policy. Dissimulation is rather the art of a slave than that of a king, and Joshua seems to have been of this opinion when in punishment of it, he consigned the Gibeonites to servitude.

The union of great caution with seeming frankness, what Sir Henry Wotton called “ the open visage and the shut thoughts,” is one of the most dangerous forms of dissimulation. It was under this guise that Joab approached Amasa, inquiring after his health, and kissing him that he might strike his sword into his heart. This prompted the kiss with which Judas betrayed his Master. It was with this that the assassins of Caesar prostrated themselves in homage at his feet, and rose up to plunge their daggers into his bosom. It is this that Machiavelli recommends, and Lord Chesterfield repeatedly advises his son to acquire.¹³ To assume an appearance of

¹² He who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to rule.

¹³ *Volto sciolto e pensieri stretti*; an open face with close thoughts. Machiavelli would almost seem to have translated into Italian, what Sir Henry Wotton had previously said in English.

openness, recklessness, or levity with a view to extort information from others, or to conceal and execute some false designs against them, is to have made no small progress in courtly intrigue and falsehood. But it is not always by a show of frankness, giddiness, or thoughtlessness that those who use these arts, execute their conspiracies. They sometimes hide their crooked and complicated plots under airs of plainness, artlessness and ignorance. The latter are the most dangerous characters because they seem to be least so.

How superior to each dark device is that just union of sincerity and prudence, which it is the duty of the Christian to exhibit in his conduct. When these are duly combined they help to form an admirable style of manners—manners, in which appears cheerfulness without levity, gravity without haughtiness, frankness without rudeness, and caution without craftiness.

The divine command, to which every Christian ought to give constant heed, is : “Let love be without dissimulation.” An entire correspondence between the mind and the demeanor is requisite to the maintenance of Christian brotherhood. It is this simplicity of conduct which inspires in the bosoms of fellow-disciples that reciprocal confidence which the children of the world are not accustomed to repose in one another. Every salutation and expression of regard should be the sincere utterance of a kind heart. When our divine Master was going to take leave of his disciples, he said : “Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you ;” but as if perceiving that his disciples were receiving his words as no more than a formal farewell, such as was heartlessly exchanged

in the intercourse of the world, he added: "not as the world giveth, give I unto you:" assuring them that, unlike the generality of men in their interchange of compliments, he was sincere in what he had said. So unmeaning and unfeeling have the salutations and congratulations of men come to be, that it is scarcely a matter of observation when they are omitted, and they are seldom received as expressions of hearty good-will when they are observed.

How grateful it is to make good one's retreat from the frigid and hypocritical manœuvres of the world into the society of single-hearted Christians,

' Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,
Nor smooth good breeding—supplemental grace—
With lean performance ape the work of love ;"

where sincerity gives security to the commerce of kindred minds, and the artless elegance of holy souls keeps at a distance all disquietness.

CHAPTER XI.

ZEAL.

THERE is no feeling which affects the deportment more than zeal. While it burns in the very core of the soul it is not confined to it, but sends its glow and flush to the outward man, pervading his extremest and smallest features, and peculiarizing his habits, humors and whims. Its relation to courtesy, therefore, is so intimate and influential, that this part of the work ought not to be concluded without some remarks upon it.

Evangelical zeal is as indefinable as the love which is its vital principle. All we can say of it is, that it is the passionate ardor of Christian love inflaming the heart, animating the intellect, energizing the actions, and enlivening the manners. The man of true zeal shows due devotion to God and to his neighbor. He does not wilfully affront his fellow, and say, "It is in doing God's service," nor turn undutifully away from his heavenly Father, saying, "I go to embrace my brother." He does not endeavor by loud prayers to overpower the sighs of the perishing, nor is he so intent on binding up a shattered world as to overlook a broken heart. In the pursuit of a holy object he does not forget to rever-

ence God and respect man. The six-winged seraphim in the vision of the prophet is a befitting emblem of such a man ; “ with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”

There is a kind of frenzy which springs from a desire of applause or of notoriety. He who is possessed with it finds satisfaction, not in doing good and receiving the approbation of his own conscience, but in doing admirably, and being praised by his fellows. Jehu showed this spirit when he gave his hand to Jehonadab and took him up into his chariot, saying : “ Come and see my zeal for the Lord.” Only let such an one hear the huzzas of the multitude, and he can leave his headlong course crimsoned with the gore of souls. Amid the gracefulness of his curvetings, and the stir of his impetuosity, he is lost to all danger and to all misery. Not a few have obtained a wider publicity by their insanity than their sober senses could ever have procured them. Outcry and raving always compel our attention, sometimes excite our pity, but never command our respect.

Related to such are those who crave the reputation of superior piety. These are never so zealous as when they are praising their own zeal. If their vain glorious deeds fail of being seen—and men naturally close their eyes at what is forced upon their sight—they resolve that their boasting words shall not fail of being heard. They never want breath to pronounce a eulogy over the lifeless remains of their own piety. Were they content with the approbation of God and angels, they might be honored of men ; but being too eager for mortal fame, they win the

.

name of devout braggarts. If a Christian must boast, he should do so only in the hearing of his friends, who can forgive his vanity, or of his acquaintance, who will not suspect him of an attempt to deceive them, or to assert what they have not the means of gainsaying. Paul was a man of earnestness; he was also a man of humility. When the vaunts of false apostles had provoked him to speak of himself, he added: "I forbear lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me." It is often easier to rise superior to the calumnies of an enemy, than to prove ourselves equal to our own boastings. A popularity based on self-praise is little short of infamy.

The fanatic always dishonors himself as well as the cause he desires to serve. Yet it is a wise and merciful provision of the Creator, that, as soon as a man falls into a meddlesome and blustering phrenzy, he begins to rivet his own shackles; the world no longer confides in his judgment, but abandons him to his own projects and to obscurity. The captious and the over-righteous commonly expose their own sins by the means they use to magnify the sins of others.

True zeal is sometimes warmly engaged about little things; never about trifles. Small and subordinate truths are constantly gliding into unmerited neglect. While great truths never want defenders, these often implore an advocate in vain. The smallest verity the all-wise God has deigned to reveal to man, occupies a place in the great system of Truth which no other can supply. Things apparently trivial come to be inexpressibly great when we reflect that the divine honor is affected by them; just as a point of etiquette as-

sumes vast consequence from the dignity of the prince who has ordained it for the regulation of his court. Lesser principles, like all other things, are to be regarded as trifles only when they usurp the place of greater ones.

Some professors seem to have stricken zeal from their catalogue of the virtues. Having witnessed abuses of it, they conclude it has no place in an amiable and well-proportioned character. Although a want of zeal renders a Christian more companionable to unbelievers, it makes him a loathing to God and a curse to the church. The soul subsiding into that genteel lukewarmness, so favorable to spiritual sleep, dreams of a competence of self-acquired virtues, and of being clad in a nuptial robe of its own workmanship, when in fact it is reposing in beggarly poverty and nakedness, and needs to be roused by the apocalyptic call: "repent and be zealous."

The apostle Paul, himself a bright example of this virtue,¹⁴ as he is of every other, has said, "that it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Zeal is a virtue only when it is engaged about "a good thing." Whether the excitement of this feeling be beneficent, must depend on the motive and the effect. An equal zeal may inspire "the voice of them that sing," "the cry for being overcome," and "the voice of them that shout for mastery:" but

¹⁴ "A gentleman" of rare refinement and fashionable experience, though clearly no friend to evangelical religion, has with noble frankness expressed his admiration of the gentility of Paul: "The character of St. Paul affords to bishops, priests, and deacons, as fine a pattern of manners as it does to all men, of ardor; his courtly bearing has often commanded respect where his arguments have failed to convert."—*The Laws of Etiquette*.

he who heaves the sigh of penitence, or sings the hymn of praise, is quite another zealot than was the idolatrous Israelite who abandoned himself to feasting, dancing, and song. Zeal should not only have a benevolent aim, but it should also be a principle constantly acting. It should animate us at all times and in all places; "*always* in a good thing." We should not, it is true, discover our religious ardor always in the same manner, but without lessening our devotion to God, and our engagedness in the cause of the Gospel; ever employed in the labor of love, we should, at the same time, demean ourselves suitably to persons, places, times, and circumstances. It is more pardonable, however, to err on the side of too warm a zeal, than on that of too cold a decorum; since the latter betrays a want of piety, while the former discovers only a lack of judgment. Consistent Christians, of the pure and primitive order, are often most unjustly accused of fanaticism. Shall people of the world be suffered to disclose their master-passions in every company, by day and by night, and on all occasions, and shall the receiver of a priceless gift never speak of his divine Benefactor? Shall he who is rescued from perdition show no tokens of gratitude to his Redeemer—give no evidence of his love to Him? Let the Christian in all circles and conditions, manifest a meek and sober earnestness; not such as exhausts itself in one frantic act—the rather such as distributes its fervor among all the faculties of the soul, and warms with its celestial fire all the public and private conduct.

The Christian of pure zeal is known by his cordiality and frankness. He is not precise, formal, ever

recollecting the lessons of the dancing-master. As he is not bound with the chains of fashionable etiquette, he does not break them. He enjoys the freedom of a benevolent soul, and walks in an Eden sunshine.

Such hearty and transparent manners are repulsive to those who make a virtue of lifeless indifference, and a chill insensibility. They are arrayed against that school of politeness, which holds that a masked countenance, a slow pace, and idle hands are requisites of a gentleman. Nevertheless these gentlemen are ardent at the gaming-table, vehement at the theatre, impetuous on the race-course, sanguine at the duel. Zealous as they are in all scenes of fashionable cruelty and vice, they would not hesitate to pronounce John the Baptist an uncourtly zealot, because he rebuked Herod for incest. But the sacred harbinger was more a courtier¹⁵ for his fidelity than Herod was a king for imprisoning him, and than Herodias was a queen for instigating her daughter to request his decapitation and to exhibit to lords and ladies his gory head in a dish.

So far from being prejudicial to gentleness, true zeal sheds a celestial lustre upon it, and graces it

¹⁵ Castiglione, though he lived near the confines of the dark ages, had a truer notion of the attributes of a courtier and of a gentleman, than some who flourish in our own enlightened times. He says the courtier ought, when there is any occasion for it, to make his prince virtuous, and by not suffering him to be deceived, and by acquainting him of the truth of everything, to screen him from flatterers, detractors, and all those who seek to corrupt his mind by unlawful pleasures. . . . al Cortegiano basterà esser tale, che se'l Principe n'havesse bisogno, potesse farlo virtuoso: . . . et di non lasciarlo igannare et di far che sempre sáppia la verità d'ogni cosa; et d'oppori à gli adulatori à malédici et à tutti coloro che machinassero di corromper l'ánimo di quello con dishonesti piaceri.—*Il Cortegiano*, Libro IV.

with a divine accomplishment. It is the crowning propriety of a being who is sensible of what he owes to his Redeemer, compassionates the woes of mankind and knows the remedy for them. Nothing is more decent than an ardent desire to benefit a wretched world; that is the truest delicacy which seeks man's immortal bliss; there is no more graceful act of courtesy than that of snatching a fellow-man from the yawning flames of the infernal abyss. Nor do we want examples uniting a holy fervency with a sweet mildness of spirit. After the sacred patterns so often mentioned in these pages, some of modern times might be named, as the Countess of Huntington, Hannah More, and Anne Hasseltine Judson, Fenelon, Count Zinzendorf, William Wilberforce, and many others not inferior to them in this respect. In the character of these we behold zeal and gentleness most agreeably blended, and each as excellent as when it is found apart in other persons.

PART II.

THE FORMS OF COURTESY IN RELIGIOUS SOCIETY.

We begin the treatment of the *manifestations* of Courtesy, with those which relate to *religious* intercourse, because they ought to be our first, though they are generally made our last concern. Very many who pass for well-bred in general society, either cannot or will not behave with decorum in the meeting-places of Christians. The reader will pardon us for occasionally addressing him in the perceptive style which we have adopted for the sake of brevity and directness.

CHAPTER I.

ORDER.

It is not our purpose to treat of order in general, or of its observance in our daily duties, though this is important, but of order in religious assemblies, where a disregard of it is fraught with very serious evils. And this is the more demanded because there is a growing neglect of it even among those who have hitherto been the most tenacious of it, and have in part provided for its maintenance by rubrics and other formularies. "Our pious ancestors," complains Dean Comber, "may make our devotions blush when we see them all the time of prayer *in procinctu*, with their knees bended, their hands uplifted, and their eyes fixed on their minister. If ever this devotion is to be restored in the church it must be by the people zealously and conscientiously joining in the ejaculations allotted to them." What would the Dean have said had he lived at this day, and in this country? He might have found plenty of arguments to convince his brethren, that it is quite time to begin to make order a matter of conscience. And those who are not to be recalled to duty by witnessing the sad effects of disorder, ought at least to feel some respect for the Divine command, and consider that they are no more

at liberty to neglect the apostolic injunction of order than they are to neglect any other.

The members of some sects have thrown off all regulations of order in worship, on the plea of keeping clear of formalism, not considering that habitual disorder is formality of the most hurtful kind. There are many congregations that are tumultuous on system, and set at naught regularity by rule. They confuse all proper mode and arrangement as scrupulously as if their salvation depended on such a procedure, and as if they would not worship God aright were they to perpetrate a single propriety. When a congregation comes to be notorious for incessant disorder, to attach a value to it, and to take great pains to practise it, they certainly deserve to be ranked among formalists of no low degree.

On the other hand, the forms usually prescribed by canons and rubrics are not safeguards against disorder. Formularies are designed to embody directions as to decorous worship, not to forbid what is foreign to such worship, and consequently they do not reach the multiform cases of irregularity. Let not, therefore, those churches which have settled their forms of worship, think themselves secure against disturbance, and to be in no need of vigilance in this direction; for while some attention to forms is requisite to order, it should ever be borne in mind that a scrupulous obedience to conventional regulations may consist with a great neglect of order.

Some religious persons, being much annoyed in their public worship by frolicsome young people, (perhaps by their own ill-bred and ill-ruled children,) comfort themselves with the thought that it is their

godliness which provokes the persecutions they suffer. In some instances undoubtedly this is the real cause of disorder in religious meetings, but unless the worshippers themselves preserve strict order, they cannot safely refer the disorders of others to their own piety. In truth, it is scarce possible in many cases, to determine the measure of godliness in an assembly of such professors, it being so obscured or hid by the prevailing confusion; it would have required more than the golden reed of the apocalyptic angel to take the area of paradise while the materials of which it was formed, were yet boiling in dark and shapeless chaos. And what renders the calculation the more difficult, is that on such occasions, the leaven of hypocrisy easily insinuates itself into the mass of real piety; since many are able to perform the most audacious feats in religious dissimulation and mockery when they have a license to rave, who have not the hardihood of conscience to pretend to any religion in a sober manner, and before a thoughtful and tranquil assembly.

St. Paul was certainly a man of respectable piety. Yet neither his biographer nor his writings convey any intimation of his having been a lover of irregularity. Although he had a wonderful religious experience he was not a fanatic, and the single occasion when he could not affirm whether he was in the body or out of it, was when he was caught up to the third heaven. There is no record of his ever having been so entranced with the glories of another world, as to forget the decorums of this. In his sublimest flights of prayer and meditation, he no more took leave of his understanding, than he did when exercising the

handicraft of tent-making; and his great mind could treat with equal ability of the proprieties of dress and the mysteries of redemption. In his portrait of Charity, we are led to see that she does not behave herself unseemly before we are allowed to discover that she is immortal; and he suspends from it a scroll thrice its length, devoted to the enforcement of certain decorums of conduct in religious assemblies. This he concludes with that command so constant and specific in its application: "Let all things be done decently and in order." He was sensible that the features of charity can display all their charms only when they are supported by a record of the deeds she can perform, and that the world is slow to confess there is anything heavenly in the aspect of one whom they suspect of violating heaven's first law.

It is a great error to suppose that where the Spirit of the Lord is there must be disorder. The divine Spirit brooded over chaos, but His presence, so far from increasing the confusion of the elements, only served to subdue and regulate them. If He were the artificer of disorder, deformity and darkness, surely He never would have attempted to adorn the skies with the effulgent and harmonious spheres. During the "pentecostal seasons," with which our times are blessed, it would be difficult to hear the rushing of a mighty wind, or to hear any man speak in the tongue "wherein he was born." Now the presence of the Holy Ghost seems not to be indicated, as in the dispensation of miracles by flames of fire, but by shouts, groans, sighs, and faintings. At the day of Pentecost the meeting was one of great solemnity. The Gali-

lean brethren must have been penetrated with holy fear at witnessing the miraculous exhibitions of that occasion, and at finding their tongues giving utterance to strange languages. The multitude were astonished and confounded when they beheld these illiterate men suddenly coming to be masters of the languages of all nations. They were all amazed and said to one another : “ We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God ! What meaneth this ? ” We read of no uproar in this vast assemblage. On the contrary, when they heard the word they were pricked in their hearts and inquired of the apostles, saying : “ What shall we do ? ” There were deep searchings of hearts that day ; then, doubtless, might have been seen the silent and half-concealed tear of many a penitent, eyes lighting up with heavenly hopes, and countenances kindling with joy unspeakable. The feelings which possessed the hearts of the converts could not have been favorable to a tumult. We are told that “ fear came upon every soul. ” But religious fear does not, like common terror, discover itself in bodily excitement and noise. In a religious awakening, unusual silence, quiet and sobriety, mark the most successful contests of the Holy Spirit, and the most glorious triumph of truth over the soul. At such times, saint and sinner are awed into stillness, as if by the solemnity of their own thoughts. Now they are frequently engaged in secret and ejaculatory prayer, and when they are in a public congregation, they seem to themselves to be in an undisturbed solitude, so greatly are their minds occupied with the Saviour, and their relation to Him. It is as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in

the valley of Megiddon; they all mourn apart. It may be objected that such is only the behavior of highly cultivated persons who are taught to suppress and conceal their feelings. Brainerd witnessed the same conduct among the untutored sons of the wilderness.

Those who suffer more than one to speak at a time in their religious meetings, offend both against the divine law of order, and the express commands of God. St. Paul would have the Corinthian brethren speak with tongues by course, and prophesy one by one. He also says that if they had the spirits of prophets they would be able to keep them under due control; that feelings which could not be confined to the limits of order and reason, were to be regarded with distrust. And he enforces this injunction by a declaration which ought forever to silence those who maintain that noise and animal excitement always necessarily accompany the operations of the Divine Spirit: "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." And not content with sending to them written directions for the preservation of propriety and regularity in their congregations, he adds: "The rest will I set in order when I come."

During the great revivals in New England, in the days of Jonathan Edwards, the pastors of some churches, in consequence of the large crowds they addressed, thought it necessary to adopt some new regulations for their congregations. These were looked upon by certain of their flocks as unwarrantable innovations, "carnal ceremonies, and dead forms." Even at this day, there are congrega-

tions so obstinately attached to their own awkward methods of worship, that the most judicious and courteous efforts of their pastors and brethren, to reform their bad usages, have been worse than vain. These brethren will have it that they are conscientious in adhering to their old ways, but while they would avoid a conformity to what they hold to be a mere external religion, they ought to consider that confirmed habits of indecorum and disorder are commonly associated with some defect of conscience. It is nothing, in their esteem, to incommode their brethren all their days, and render the house of God forbidding to the world, when, by a little cheap attention, they might render divine worship comfortable to themselves, and tolerable to others. Such persons are apt to be bigoted and deluded in matters of vital concern. They are commonly those who must be allowed to go to heaven in their own way. When Mahomet, on one occasion, was going to pay a visit to Paradise, it is said he was invited to make his own choice, from a variety of suitable vehicles, to carry him through the skies, such as winged horses, fiery chariots, and celestial sedans; but he refused them all, and would be borne to heaven upon nothing but his favorite ass.

A disorderly congregation spends the hours allotted to worship with little honor to God and advantage to themselves. Confusion, disarrangement, and indecorum indispose the mind for the exercises of devotion. Uncouth and restless deportment distract and confuses the mind. With such an assembly few are wont to associate ideas of holy fear and reverential worship. We do not realize the awful presence

of the Eternal Spirit, nor taste antepasts and prelibations of the celestial rest. How different the influence which pervades the solemn assembly where a reverential order is observed—an order equally devoid of affected carelessness and fastidious exactness; where no act diverts the mind from prayer, and praise, and truth; where all is lulled to quiet, as if by the notes of some seraphic song.

The opinion of the unbelieving world is not to be entirely disregarded in this matter. They are not without some notions of propriety, even with respect to the institutions of religion. Few of them are so lost to reason as to suppose disorder appropriate to God's house. Even those who are guilty of producing it, condemn their own conduct when they are left to their more sober thoughts. It is a dehortation addressed to all professors: "Let not your good be evil spoken of." Disorder, being a mark of insanity, those professors, who are addicted to it in their devotional exercises, expose themselves to the imputation of mental derangement. And some think the charge not at all to their discredit. St. Paul, however, did not like to have any one entertain such an opinion of him, and paused in the midst of one of his most eloquent speeches to deny the charge of madness. And his own inspired writings show that he regarded it a thing of some consequence for Christians to preserve the reputation of sober and reasonable men: "If the Church be come together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?"

If order were in request in this world alone, and

of no use in the heavenly assemblies, we might, perhaps, dispense with its obligations without ultimate disadvantage to ourselves. But are the observances of harmonious intercourse to be dispensed with in the eternal palaces, and the pure pleasure of courtesy, of which disorder must forever be destructive, unknown among angelic beings? The dying consolation of the great Hooker was, that he was going to a world of order, and if the description of heaven, which heaven's own Builder has given us, are to be credited, or if anything can be gathered from the deportment of those of its shining inhabitants who have visited our sphere, surely there is no neglect of order there.

CHAPTER II.

DEPORTMENT AT CHURCH.

BOTH due regard for order, and the courteous feelings treated of in the First Part, bid us be attentive to our conduct in the house of God. If these be in us, and abound, they will lead us to observe most of the following usages :

When you approach the doors of a church refrain from conversation, and uncover the head as soon as you enter the aisle, advancing with a quiet and moderate step. On the one hand, avoid walking as though you were in a funeral procession ; and on the other, as though you were walking for a wager. You should not go to your pew during any exercise of devotion. Some do not scruple to hurry along the aisle while the congregation is engaged in prayer, or to march to the time of sacred song, disturbing its harmonies with their noisy feet. Always take the shortest way to your pew, unless this requires you to walk the entire length of the middle aisle, when it is proper to take a side aisle, though you should thereby be compelled to go farther in reaching your pew. If you are accompanying a lady *to* church, permit her to go before, and open doors ; if accompanying her *out*, go before and open

doors. If the lady is your *superior*, both in coming in and going out you open the door of the house and that of the pew, allowing her to go before you, and following at her left hand. In opening a door for her, avoid, if possible, passing between her and it, and turning your back toward her. Observe the same rule with a gentleman who is your superior. This rule is especially observed by servants, and, on occasions of ceremony, by others.

It is proper for you, as well as the sexton, to offer your arm to any aged or infirm lady of your acquaintance who may be entering the church unattended, and to accompany her to her pew.

If you are under the disagreeable necessity of passing a person who is sitting or standing in a slip, present to him neither your back nor your breast, but your side ; the narrowness of the passage is scarcely an apology for a violation of this dictate of propriety. If a gentleman is seated in a slip, he should arise, open the door, and pass out, when a lady presents herself for admission, which she ought to do by simply touching the top of the door, without an effort to open it, or exhibiting any uneasiness ; for this would sometimes be interpreted as a rebuke for the tardiness of the occupant, who would perhaps at such a hint, stumble out to relieve her impatience, or resentfully remain in his seat, and allow the comer to help herself to one. None but a lame or decrepit gentleman should suffer a lady to open the door of a slip and seat herself next to it, or to crowd past him to the other end of the seat.

Make as little noise as possible in opening and shutting the pew door. Enter and retire from a pew

deliberately. Never place your hat in the aisle, if there is room for it in the pew.

Always be seated in your pew before the hour of worship. With a view to this, be dressed an hour or two before the bell rings. Even put on your gloves before going into the street. The want of a few minutes just previous to church-time, occasions blunders and accidents which discompose the mind, and disturb Divine worship.

When you happen to be in your seat some time before service, abstain from bows, shaking hands, congratulating, talking, whispering, or gazing curiously or vacantly round the room, but sit quietly, and occupy your mind with subjects suitable to the place. A silent ejaculation should be offered as soon as you take your seat. If you are a gentleman, and a lady, or your superior, or a feeble person is standing in a crowded aisle, rise and offer such an one your seat.

When the hour of service arrives, give your entire attention to the introductory part of the worship. Do not accustom yourself to wriggling, or seeking an easy posture at the moment the service begins. If a person in your pew, or in one near you, has no book, offer him one of yours; if it is a lady, the book should be presented open at the proper place. In summer, if a person near you has no fan, offer him yours. Turn over the leaves of your book, and return it to the book-rack without noise. When you assume the various postures the service requires, do it deliberately, without any rustling, starting, or flourishing. If you have gilded and embellished books, do not make a display of them. If you have

a pretty hand, or a costly ring on your finger, do not rest your arm along the back of the seat in order to exhibit it. If you carry a cane to church, do not sit kissing it, or passing it along your lips and chin. Canes and umbrellas should be left at a stand near the door. Never open a book, except for reference to a text. Do not pull out your watch during service, as if you were some Doeg, "detained before the Lord." Do not accustom yourself to stare at others, to ogle, or to look behind you. Significant glances of the eye ought not to be exchanged in a congregation, or in any public place, neither those signs of free-masonry and odd-fellowship by which intimates convey to each other their ideas.

Never yawn in church : if this accident befalls you, conceal it, else everybody will follow your example. When you are going to sneeze, press your handkerchief into the inner corners of your eyes, or upon the upper lip ; either is a preventive.

After blowing your nose, do not look into your handkerchief as if you were looking into a casket of pearls or rubies. Do not imitate the dandy, who fumbles gracefully about his pocket for his handkerchief which obtrudes from it, and after flaunting it, applies it to his dry nose : sacred herald, silence, and all ye creatures that have ears, hear

" The loud dome re-echo to his nose."

To chew tobacco in church is profanation ; to show any signs of the practice to the worshippers, is persecution. Under the Christian dispensation, beasts that chew the cud are not held to be ceremonially clean.

Do not show uneasiness and weariness, or change your seat without good reason. If you go out during service, do not rise in an animated part of the sermon, as when the preacher is making the application, or when he is alluding to denominational opinions. You should seize that moment to arise when there is a pause in the sermon, or when the preacher has concluded a part of the subject. Go out coolly and gravely. Ladies should not leave the house in the evening, unattended. Those who have very young children with them ought to sit near the door, so that they may leave the house as soon as they begin to cry.

Never leave the house when you ascertain that your favorite is not to preach. To say nothing of higher motives, an occasional disappointment is the price you ought to be willing to pay for the pleasure of hearing him, and you cannot better show your regard for him, than by listening to his friend. Besides, it is a miserable compliment to pay a stranger, to run out of doors as soon as he appears in the pulpit.

When you see a stranger coming up the aisle, throw open your pew to him. It is also courteous for you to do so when the sexton brings a person to your pew. In churches that attract many strangers, a number of pews should be reserved for them in the most commodious part of the house. If on entering your pew you find a stranger in it, ask him to remain if he betrays any uneasiness; and although your pew should be full without him, seek a seat elsewhere rather than disturb him. To bow him out as some do, is very uncivil and selfish. "Have you not mis-

taken the pew, sir?" blandly said a Sunday exquisite, as with emphatic gracefulness he opened the door. "I beg your pardon, sir," replied the undaunted stranger, rising to go out, "I fear I have; I took it for a Christian's." The stranger should thank you for the favor of a seat; and you, in return, should invite him to sit with you whenever he comes to your place of worship.

Unless conscience or expediency forbid, you should conform to the ceremonies of the congregation in which you are worshipping; standing when they stand; bowing when they bow; and kneeling when they kneel.

Each member of the Protestant Episcopal Church and Church of England has a part assigned him in the rubric, and he cannot consistently refuse to perform it. Especially should he see to it, that his responses be not omitted; that they be audible; and that they be made in the appropriate tone.

To omit them where the rubric requires them, is to mutilate the service, and, in many cases, to destroy its meaning and frustrate its design. Take for example the celebrated hymn, called the "*Te Deum*;" for the congregation to pass by in silence the passages which they ought to utter, is to hide more than half its beauties, if not to smother it to death. Yet in this country these responses are often withheld; and in England it is, not seldom, thought sufficient that the clerk, instead of the congregation, respond to the minister. Again, if the minister says, "O Lord, open thou our lips," they do not respond, "and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise;" or when he says, "O Lord, make clean our hearts with-

in us," they refuse to respond, "and take not thy Holy Spirit from us," they break the connection of related Scriptures, and make void some of the most edifying portions of Divine revelation.

And these responses should be distinctly audible. If they are not, they had better not be made at all; for then the great discrepancy between what the voice is, and what it ought to be, would not be apparent; and the mind would be left to form a just notion of the utterance which would befit the sentiment. Take for example the ninety-first psalm, the first in the service. It begins thus, "Oh come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the God of our salvation;" to which the people should respond, "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with psalms." This response, it is hardly necessary to say, cannot be properly made by mumbling, whispering, or a quivering of the lips.

Finally, the congregation should speak in a tone consonant with the several offices and the various sentiments they contain. When the minister exhorts the congregation to accompany him with "an *humble* voice" in saying the general confession, it is meant that they should speak in a low tone in this part of the service, and not that the subdued voice which is in harmony with penitential sorrow should be maintained through all the offices of the liturgy. Such monotony as is heard in many congregations is both a cause and an effect of formality.

We will here add some pertinent remarks from the elegant pen of W. Roberts, Esq., whose "Portraiture of a Christian Gentleman" treats this branch of the

subject more fully than our space will allow us to do. "As our liturgy," he observes, "is so framed as to call imperiously upon the people to give audible utterance to their part of the service, so does it call upon the minister to give time for the congregation to finish what the rubric has appointed to be answered or repeated by them before he proceeds with the service. It is scarcely consistent with the decorum of good manners, much less with the dignity and efficacy of our forms of worship, so to tread upon the heels of those who are endeavoring to repeat according to the rubric, as to force them to sacrifice a moiety of what they had to say, or hurry to the conclusion."

When you partake of the sacramental supper, lay aside your book, gloves, or whatever you may hold in your hand. If the ordinance is observed at an altar, approach it with a slow and reverential step. Do not try to get a place to the exclusion of others. On such an occasion, as well as at a funeral, ladies may cover themselves with a veil half drawn.

When the benediction is pronounced you should rise facing the clergyman. It is improper to take up your cloak, hat, or cane, to pull on a glove, or to open a pew door during this part of the service. Never begin to retire till the benediction is fairly pronounced; even then be not in haste to leave church.

In going out, if a lady accompanies you, offer to carry her book if she has any in her hand; go before to clear the way for her; and when necessary, hold the door open while she is passing out. In going along the aisle carefully avoid touching others. In an innumerable multitude of courteous persons, you would never witness the slightest crowding, unless it

should be impossible for them to find sufficient ground whereon to stand in all the wide world. Never put on your hat for the sake of preserving it from the press, or for the sake of anything else. Keep it off till you reach the door ; this mark of reverence is due to the house of God—not to those who are accustomed to crowd their way out of it.

Avoid talking in the vestibule or in the street after service. If you have anything very important to say to a person, do not stop him, but go along with him till you have done speaking. When leaving church on ordinary occasions, you should salute only those you may meet in going into the street. When it rains, and you have an umbrella, remember to share it with one who has none.

If you are in the habit of sleeping in church take no breakfast ; if this fails of curing the disease, take no dinner. Sometimes a walk before church is beneficial, especially to a man of business. But nothing is so sure a remedy as the cultivation of an active and daily piety. No man sleeps when engaged in an occupation that is interesting to him.

The man of fashion keeps all his engagements. He goes to a ball or an assembly when it is dark, stormy, and cold, lest he cause disappointment. The Christian should be equally zealous from better motives, and in a better cause. Jehovah as much deserves to be worshipped when he reveals his power and majesty in the storm, as when he displays his benevolence and handiwork in the sunlit landscape.

CHAPTER III.

POSTURE IN PRAYER.

CHRISTIANS belonging to churches which have prescribed by their rubrics the postures to be assumed in various parts of worship, ought, for the sake of propriety and order, to maintain inviolably those postures.

The members of those churches which follow no established rules, should, in their several congregations, decide to observe some uniform posture. And as some churches prefer to conform to ancient and scriptural usage, it may not be inexpedient to examine primitive examples.

1. *Public congregations* composed of believers and unbelievers were unknown among the Hebrews previously to the building of the synagogue. Their congregations consisted of Jews and proselytes alone, assembled commonly in an open space, and unprovided with seats. During prayer they sometimes used standing and sometimes prostration. When Aaron and his sons were about to offer the sacrifice, in answer to which the glory of the Lord appeared to Israel, "all the congregation drew near and stood before the Lord," but when the people saw fire come out from before the Lord, and consume the offering,

“they fell upon their faces.”¹⁶ The same postures were assumed on a like occasion, at the dedication of the temple.¹⁷ On occasions of humiliation the congregation prostrated themselves before the Lord;¹⁸ on those of praise, thanksgiving, and benediction they stood.¹⁹ In the ninety-fifth Psalm, composed during the Babylonish captivity, when the Hebrews probably worshipped in private dwellings, we find the following words: “O come, let us worship and *bow down*; let us *kneel* before the Lord our Maker.”

In the days of our Lord, the Jews seem to have stood while they prayed in the temple and synagogues.²⁰ Our Lord exemplified and approved this attitude. He appears to have stood while praying amidst a concourse of Jews at the grave of Lazarus, also while he was making the intercessory prayer as recorded in the tenth chapter of John. In his direction to his disciples with respect to prayer he said: “When ye *stand* praying,” etc. The multitudes that were accustomed to listen to his teaching, seem not to have been habituated to *sitting* during his prayers, else it would not have been necessary for him to “command the people to *sit down* on the ground,” when he was about to bless the food of which they were to partake.

The posture of standing was, at this period, observed by those praying in the temple, in compliance with ancient traditions. These required the worshipper to stand as a servant before his master, with all reverence and fear; however weary he might be with standing he might not sit down: no person whatever

¹⁶ Lev. 9 ch.

¹⁷ 2 Chron. 6 & 7 ch.

¹⁸ Ex. 12 : 27. 2 Chron. 7 . 3, and 18 : 29, and 29 : 30; Neh. 8 : 6.

¹⁹ 2 Chron. 6 : 3, and 7 : 6. Neh. 8 : 6. ²⁰ Luke 18 : 13. Matt. 6 : 4.

being allowed that privilege, except the kings of the house of David.

With respect to the posture in public congregational prayer used in Apostolic times, we have no instance, unless this passage in 1 Cor. 14 : 25, is to be regarded as one : "Falling down on his face he will worship God."

The Christians of the second century universally stood during congregational prayer, as appears from the unanimous testimony of Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian.

From this brief review of the ancient usages in public worship, we arrive at no other conclusion than that a variety of postures was practised, as kneeling, prostration and standing, and that none of these ever received the divine disapprobation. It is not a matter either of positive or of moral precept, but one of expediency. Yet, while a congregation is not bound to adopt one posture more than another, we may not hence infer that every congregation is not required to maintain some one uniform posture : for with respect to public worship we have this authoritative injunction ; "Let all things be done decently and in order." These are both positive and moral requirements. And since uniformity and method are necessary to order in a public assembly, the use of different postures, by different members of the same congregation, is a violation of order. In those religious assemblies where no rule is followed with respect to postures, there is generally something worse than disorder. For some to kneel, others to sit lolling over the backs of seats, some to sit erect, others to stand facing different ways, and others again to

stand with one foot on the seats, with their elbows on their knees, is absolutely indecent and ridiculous. Not to assume some common attitude in congregational prayer is to neglect order and decorum—duties which the nature of things and common sense teach every individual to observe in his secular affairs, and God expressly requires him to regard in the sacred assembly.

But in determining the one posture to be used, we may not adopt that of sitting. Among the diverse attitudes practised by *public* worshippers in olden times we do not find this. David is said to have “*sat* before the Lord” on one occasion of *family* prayer, (1 Chron. 17 : 16 ;). That none but his household, including the prophet Nathan, were present, is proved from Chap. 16 : 43. Sitting is not at all expressive of the feelings appropriate to the suppliant. In making their requests to their superiors, men stand, they bow the knee, they prostrate themselves ; but in no age, and no nation, has sitting ever been regarded as the proper posture of a petitioner. And if we do not think it becoming so to present a memorial before any earthly authority, can we deem it proper so to plead for mercy in the presence of the King of kings ? Sitting is the posture of power, of ease, of indifference, of infirmity. But do those who assume it mean to show to their Omnipotent Lord and Maker their might and authority, their sufficiency and security, their insensibility and lukewarmness ? Whatever they may intend to show by this posture, one thing they do most clearly confess ; they openly declare themselves to be spiritual invalids.

2. In *prayer-meetings* composed of professors alone,

kneeling is the attitude recommended by the example of primitive Christians. When the elders of the Church at Ephesus were about to take leave of St. Paul at Miletus, "*he kneeled down* and prayed with them all." And when, during the same voyage, he was going to re-embark at Tyre, he, his pious companions, and the Christians residing in the city, who went with them to the ship, *kneeled down* on the shore and prayed. This posture is, and ever has been regarded the most proper expression of reverence, humility, contrition and subjection.

3. In *private prayer* the Scriptures furnish examples of a variety of attitudes. When Abraham prayed he fell on his face. In the same act Elijah bowed down on the summit of Carmel with his face between his knees. Daniel prayed in his chamber kneeling, and Hezekiah lying on his bed. When our incarnate Redeemer prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, it appears, from a comparison of the narratives of Matthew and Luke, that he first kneeled down, but as his prayer became more importunate, and his agony more violent, he fell on his face.

4. Of the posture anciently used in *family prayer*, the Scriptures afford no other instance than that of David, cited above. It is only around the family altar that all Anglo-Saxon Christians assume the same attitude. The German Christians sit during family prayer. They—Tholuck among them—have expressed themselves annoyed at the kneeling at British family worship.

Irregularity of attitude in congregations and prayer-meetings can only be reformed by the unanimous co-operation of church-members. Wherever it ex-

ists they should meet, and with feelings of deference, forbearance and kindness, interchange their views of the sacred word, of propriety and expediency on the subject, or else agree to submit the whole question to the decision of their pastor or some other person. The minority should cheerfully submit to the decision of the majority, and aid in its execution. By persevering use the Church will bring the congregation to follow their example, who, when they have once discovered the beauties of order, will unite with the Church in preserving them.

CHAPTER IV.

POSTURE OF A CONGREGATION DURING THE SINGING OF A CHOIR.

FOR a congregation to sit while the choir is singing or while they are themselves singing, must be regarded a violation of Christian propriety as well as an innovation upon ancient usage.

Most well-regulated congregations having adopted standing as the proper posture during this part of divine service, there is only one question concerning which they differ; that is, whether a congregation ought to face the choir during its performances. In the parlor and the drawing-room, we turn our faces towards those whom we reverence and respect; propriety seldom allowing us to sit with our backs towards such persons, in such places. But we do not observe this rule in a public assembly. Here we may, with entire propriety, sit with our faces turned away from our superiors. No one scruples to sit with his back towards a choir while it is not singing. Why then should we face it while it is singing? When in the act of singing, does it deserve more respect than when it is silent?

It is true we face those addressing us; the congregation look at the preacher who is discoursing to

them. But is it the duty of a choir to preach to us? We are indeed directed to "teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord." Yet Christians may teach and admonish one another, without appointing a choir to teach and admonish them—a choir, perhaps, composed wholly or in great part, of unbelievers. Let it be allowed, as in truth it ought to be, that singers may teach betimes, it must also be admitted that the prime design of singing in a religious assembly, is to worship God. The injunction quoted, directs us to sing to the Lord. We have the example of our Lord for teaching in prayer, but he prayed to God looking up towards heaven. Instruction is not the object either of prayer or singing. The principal design of sacred song is confession, supplication, adoration and praise to God. The choir should address Him, and, therefore, the congregation ought not to assume the attitude of auditors, but that of co-worshippers with the choir.

The mind cannot be fully engaged in the worship of God, while it is contemplating external objects. There cannot be a due abstraction of soul, if we are required to eye the choir at the same time that we ought to be making melody in our hearts unto the Lord. During the singing, we should not allow our eyes to rest on any object except the book before us.

The members of a choir are not in a state of mind favorable to Divine praise, while conscious of being made a spectacle to an entire congregation. The minds of some pious singers may not be disturbed by such an exhibition of themselves. The mass, however, of humble and devout singers do not covet the

public eye while rendering to Jehovah the heart's pure offering of praise.

The congregation and the choir should stand facing in the same direction. When both do not assume the same posture, they detract from the order of the service, and the effect of the music. Every one must have observed how much more grand and imposing is the sight of a well-drilled regiment than that of a confused and motley crowd. The sensation made by the former might be termed the pleasure of method ; that of the latter the disgust of confusion. So in a worshipping assembly, how much more pleasing and elevating to the mind is order, than irregularity. If they face different ways, or if one part of the assembly be detached from the other, the unity and power of the impression is diminished. Hence the choir should stand on the same floor with the congregation, and separated from it by the least possible interval. To a serious mind there is something profitable in the thought, to say nothing of the sight, of being one among a great praising congregation made still greater by the reinforcement of a choir, and all standing on the same or nearly the same ground. Such an arrangement of the choir, though it discovers more the smaller defects of the singing than when it is executed at a greater distance, yet when it comes from the soul, greatly adds to its general effect. It may not be more admired, but it will be more felt. The effect of music is the most powerful when executed on a level with the position of the audience. When the melodies of sacred song roll horizontally from ear to ear, and heart to heart,

“Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony,”

untunable indeed must be the spirit that does not share the common rapture.

This usage of facing a singing choir, probably originated in the regulations of oratorios and concerts, where the audience are expected to face the performers who are exhibiting their skill, without pretending to sing Jehovah's praise. These musical shows and entertainments have already sadly corrupted the primitive majesty and simplicity of Christian psalmody, and in their place have served to introduce into choirs, theatric artifice and display. Were choirs to occupy a more sequestered place, or were longer screens or curtains drawn before them, they would be less tempted to practise those airs and attitudes which some deride, and others lothe.

Let every Christian congregation cease to regard its choir as a public show, and themselves mere auditors and spectators. Let choirs on their part, shew their humility by retiring from the gaze of the congregation, consider that the less they are seen, the better will they be heard, and make such other reforms as shall assist to excommunicate from the church every shred of the theatre.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF A CONGREGATION DURING SINGING.

MANY improprieties have grown out of the common agreement, that congregations are to praise God by proxy ; that to the choir alone belongs the duty of engaging in this part of public worship. Those who have not the faculty of singing, ought indeed to withhold the tribute of the voice, but they are not discharged from presenting the offering of the soul, and “making melody in their hearts to the Lord ;” nor are they released from the observance of the decencies due to God’s house and to this part of the service. We do not, however, purpose here to enforce the duty of congregational singing, but simply to touch upon a few indecorums which are often committed by ministers and congregations in connection with singing.

1. During this part of divine service, the minister should, as far as his other duties and his knowledge of music will permit, either join in singing or engage in silent praise, instead of turning over the leaves of his Bible, prayer-book, hymn-book, reading his notes, receiving notices, giving directions to the sexton, or conferring with the elders or deacons.

2. The minister should be on his guard against giving out so many stanzas as to fatigue the singers and to exhaust the patience of tuneless listeners, or so few as to render musical expression impracticable. Nor should he give out more than two hymns of the same metre during one service: but should vary the metres as much as the nature of the service or the subject of his discourse will permit.

3. When he gives out a hymn or announces singing, he should not say: "The congregation will now have the pleasure of listening to the *performance* of a piece of music *by the choir*." "The audience will now be *entertained* with singing *by the choir*." "Will the choir please *treat* the assembly with a song of praise." He should invariably give out the number of the hymn, and so announce the singing that the congregation will understand that they have a part to bear in this service.

4. He ought not to call for a sacred song or a voluntary, on purpose to drown noise or hush turbulence, or merely to save time or amuse an audience, while contribution-boxes, subscription-papers, or programmes are circulating, or while the members are taking their seats for the celebration of the eucharist.

5. When it is the custom of the minister *to read* a hymn, he should not at any time dispense with it; especially at the beginning of the services. Such a freak is apt to take the choir and congregation by surprise, and throw them into consternation. The same caution holds of giving out a hymn at an unusual time.

6. He should beware of making any motion or sign which indicates to the congregation that the song is

ended before it is so. Who has not seen a mistake of this kind on the part of the minister or some hearer, disconcert the singers, and throw a whole congregation into awkward postures.

7. The sexton should not offer to show strangers their pews during this service, and though he cannot keep those who have pews of their own from going out and in when they please, yet when he chances to be entering an aisle when a hymn is starting, or being sung, he should reverently stop till singing is ended, and thus by his example teach others to "keep their foot when they go to the house of God." He should not at this time open and shut doors, blinds, or ventilators, renew fires or regulate lights. With a view to his convenience, as well as that of the congregation, the minister ought not to hurry from one part of the service to another, but allow a short interval between them.

8. The congregation should take this opportunity to lay down or take up books, or, if need be, to leave the house, or change seats, and never do such things at a time when they ought to be giving their whole attention to the service.

9. Persons in the congregation should not smile or whisper to each other when anything unusual is seen or heard in the choir, or for any other cause during any part of the worship.

10. They should neither take their seats nor stand with wriggling or restive movements, nor leave the house during a song of praise.

11. Each person ought to hold his hymn-book in his hand, unless he can sing the stanzas *memoriter*,

and not to sit or stand in idleness, or with a vacant or wandering eye.

These are some of the many faulty habits and actions of which professors of music, and choristers or precentors continually complain. In order to a thorough reform in these matters, worshippers have only to consider their relation to the choir, their duty as to singing, and to notice what is proper and what is not proper in their deportment. Few intend to behave untowardly in the house of God. Most people are betrayed into such indecorums by not heeding the words of Paul, who exhorts us to "think on these things."

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHOIRS.

EACH member of a choir is exposed to the scrutiny of a whole congregation, more especially when he is placed in the gallery and faced by the auditory. However retired the choir may be, the singer will, from various causes, attract more than ordinary attention. Hence the importance of his forming agreeable manners and habits.

1. Members of choirs should not stop at the door, near staircases, or lounge in galleries until the beginning of the service, but go directly to their places, and sit without conversation till the hour of worship arrives.

2. Make no noise in getting the books and turning over the leaves. Always procure, and open the book at the proper place before the choir rises. Do not hem and hawk either before or during the singing. Do not hum or whistle the tune to be sung. When about to sing all the members should rise together, and with as little noise as possible. Do not sit in the choir during singing, unless you are so indisposed as not to be able to stand.

3. That a choir keep time is important certainly. But to this end it is not necessary that the chorister,

by shaking his head, beating with his hands, stamping his feet, transform himself into a clock with wheels clicking, pendulum swinging, hammer striking, all going. When the choir needs to be furnished with an accurate division of time, the leader alone should provide it, the others avoiding all motions of the head, hands and feet.

4. Do not make a display of your voice, or attempt to convince the congregation that you are the best singer in the choir, by always allowing your voice to be heard far above that of others. Always sing to the end the part which you begin, and never change from one part to another. When professing to sing the praises of the Most High do not commit the sin of self-glorification.

5. Organists and other musicians should not allow the sounds of the instruments to overpower the human voice, but make them subservient to it.

6. While singing do not show your acquaintance in the congregation that you recognize them by nodding, or winking at them. Do not cast your eyes about the room, or lift them very devoutly towards heaven; let them rest on your book. When a mistake is committed by others, or by yourself, do not simper or cast your eyes about the choir as if searching for the offender.

7. When singing, shun gaping, grimace, and every singularity, also an affectation of ease and carelessness. Let your feelings and behavior correspond with the sentiment and the air. In general let your countenance discover the devottness and serenity of your mind, and let your postures be dignified and modest.

8. Do not resume your seat or close your book till

the last sound has died away, but maintain the same posture till the music has ceased. The choir should take their seats simultaneously and without noise.

9. After singing close your books, and return them to their place without noise or ostentation. Do not lounge in your seat inattentive to the rest of the service, as if you came to church only to sing. Do not suffer yourself to fall asleep; snoring is the most untunable sound in nature.

10. It is a great impropriety for an organist to be playing a voluntary when the hour of the service has arrived; also for a choir to sing a voluntary either at the beginning or close of the service without the consent or direction of the officiating clergyman.

11. During the sermon do not change your place or leave the choir, or whisper or look over books. Do not remain after service for conversation, or to gaze at the retiring congregation. On the other hand, do not hurry impatiently or noisily out of the choir. "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God."

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEPARTMENT AT PRAYER-MEETINGS.

THE prayer-meeting should be regulated by many of the rules which the good order of a more public congregation requires us to observe. To the hints contained in Chapter III., we add the following.

When you go late to a prayer-meeting, do not enter the room during any exercises of devotion, but seize the opportunity afforded by an interval, to go softly to your seat. If the services are not begun when you enter the room, do not join a group of talkers, but go directly to your place, and by secret ejaculation and meditation, prepare your mind for the services of the meeting. If a clergyman is present when it is your turn to introduce the services, courtesy requires you to ask him to take your place. The portion of Scripture read should be short and appropriate. When each hymn is a voluntary, the members should avoid singing often, or much at one time. If exhortations are delivered, let them be short, pointed, and animated. Aged people should not extend their prayers and exhortations to an unreasonable length. They should consider that brevity is not only the soul of wit, but of wisdom also.

Uniformity in the subjects of prayer should be

avoided. You are in danger of praying exclusively for the church of which you are a member, or of confining your requests to the interests of one sect or one section. In missionary concerts pray for missions; let your prayers always be appropriate to the occasion.

Nothing is more out of place in a prayer-meeting than a discussion. If a brother advances an opinion you do not deem orthodox, converse with him apart on the subject at some other time. To take up and magnify an unguarded expression dropt in a prayer-meeting is indicative of a worldly and contentious spirit. We do not assemble round a common mercy-seat as disagreeing controvertists, but as united suppliants. Above all things, do not deny an assertion another has made in prayer, or pray for things from which another has prayed to be delivered. If you do not like your brother's prayer, privately and courteously make known to him your exceptions to it; or what is commonly better, silently dismiss your dislikes.

When the attendance is small or late, do not complain, but pray for absent members with a charity that "hopeth all things and thinketh no evil." Let those who habitually neglect the prayer-meeting, or rarely go to it, consider that in their absence their empty places are always haunted with evil suggestions to the great annoyance of regular comers.

In order to secure a large attendance, punctuality and brevity should be engraven in letters of gold over the door of every room sacred to social prayer. Long intervals between prayers, or between singing and praying, should not be tolerated. Each moment should be profitably employed. But there will not

be punctuality unless there be brevity; for when the prayers and exhortations are long, the brethren become too drowsy and weary to be prompt.

Our minds do not measure duration either while they are deeply interested or are given up to listlessness. Hence, the most fervent on the one hand and the most formal on the other, are liable to disregard time. Houses of prayer should be furnished with clocks which strike every five minutes. In general a prayer-meeting should continue one hour, and he who leads the devotion should dismiss it when the time is expired. The Puritan preachers used an hour-glass to admonish them of time; and Butler, alluding to it, teaches in doggerel a practical truth.

“ Gifted brethren preaching by
A carnal hour-glass, do imply
Illumination can convey
Into them *what* they have to say,
But not *how much*.”

Therefore be very attentive to the length of your prayers. By brevity you will avoid repetition. The Pharisees who were guilty of making long prayers, were also guilty of vain repetitions. In your closet make as long prayers as you please, but in a prayer-meeting let them be shorter than you desire. Whatever blessings long social prayers may ever have obtained, they never yet procured the blessing of a prosperous prayer-meeting.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES.

THE nuptials of Christians ought never to be celebrated with needless parade or lavish expenditure. It becomes saints to disapprove those sumptuous feasts and giddy festivities which are the too common accompaniments of these ceremonies. The cheerfulness, so proper on such occasions, should be tempered with dignity and sobriety. Somewhat of that holy elevation of heart which St. Paul recommends to the Corinthian converts, becomes the Christian on every occasion: "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it."

If a marriage is to be solemnized in a church, it ought not to be on the Sabbath; much less at the beginning or close of public worship. Other thoughts than those usually suggested by such a scene should occupy our minds on this hallowed day. The gayety and festivity which the ceremony causes on such occasions, and which are usually thought becoming at weddings, are not consonant with the solemnity of divine worship. Let those clergymen who so cheer-

fully consent to officiate at these ceremonies on the Lord's day before a worshipping congregation, weigh in the balances of the sanctuary the ill effects of such a scene on the mass of the audience. We do not say, that as Christian ministers, they are bound in all such cases to refuse to celebrate the rite. Samuel disapproved Israel's making a king at all; but if Israel would have the king, Samuel thought it his duty to anoint him.

When the marriage is solemnized in a church, the usual order of the ceremonies is the following. If the parties go to church in more than one carriage, the lady, her relatives, and the bridesmaid go in one carriage, the gentleman, his relatives, and the bride-man in another. Acquaintance invited to the wedding repair to the church at the appointed hour, the friends of the gentleman being seated on the right, and those of the lady on the left of the middle aisle. They should always leave the front slips or pews to the parties. The marriage train advances towards the altar in the following order: the lady gives her hand to her father, or to one who represents him, then follow the gentleman and his mother, or one who represents her, next the bridesmaid and bride-man, followed by the members of the two families in couples. The other and more common custom is for the groom to receive the bride when she alights from her carriage in the street. As the train advances towards the altar, the company present should respectfully arise from their seats and stand till the relations are seated in the front pews. The latter should arrange themselves in the same order as acquaintance. The couple either stand or kneel at the altar, according to the custom

of the church in which they are married ; the bride-maid at the left of the lady, and the brideman at the right of the gentleman. The bridegroom stands or kneels at the right of the bride, and bears her right hand upon his. Here the ceremonies vary according to the usages of different denominations. After the benediction or the prayer, as the order is, the married couple usually salute the assembly and receive the compliments of their friends. Immediately after the solemnization it is customary for the parents and new relations to salute the married lady ; but all salutations are improper in a *church edifice*. When returning from church the husband gives his hand to his wife.

At the reception which usually takes place the same day or evening, at home, those invited should bring their cards, and hand them to the servant at the door. This saves him the trouble of noting down their names. The number of bridemen and bridesmaids varies from one to six. On occasions of great ceremony there are present two "maids in attendance," whose place is in the rear of the bride and the bridegroom. At the close of the service the organist sometimes plays a tune appropriate to the occasion.

The rites of marriage are often modified to suit the taste and convenience of the parties, especially when performed at residences.

A newly-married couple should, if practicable, avoid appearing in company at church or other public places soon after the nuptials. For the first two or three weeks they should go to church as they did previously to marriage, with their former attendants

and in their usual dress. After the wedding the nuptial attire should be laid aside, at least such parts of it as want simplicity and plainness, and no more be worn on any public occasion.

The close companionship of husband and wife in general society is forbidden by fashion, as a plea against jealousy and uxoriousness. But we do not think it advisable that they should live on such terms of connubial estrangement, as to give separate parties, make separate engagements, or form acquaintance that are not mutual. Such practices are of unhappy moral tendency. It may, at the same time, be proper for husband and wife, when they are at a party, not to seat themselves beside each other, not to engage in domestic talk, not to speak often of each other, and not to serve each other at the table of another. Though some married people err in the opposite extreme, others indulge such an excessive fondness for each other, and for their children, as narrows their souls and blights the sentiments of humanity.

CHAPTER IX.

FUNERALS AND MOURNING.

IF it be true, as a great moralist has observed, that few men die without affectation, it is quite as true that few men are buried without it. Man finds his account in dissembling, not only to the living whose good opinion he would propitiate, but also over the unconscious remains of the dead, that he may keep up a reputation for sensibility and friendship among the living. Far back in antiquity women mourned for hire, and even the Hebrews, who ought to have been honest in their sorrows, we find wailing by the day, even by the month, and assisting their lamentation by the melody of the flute. Such was their practice in the age of our Lord, and though he must have found repeated opportunity to correct it, he left it, as he did some other social abuses, to be gradually done away by the progress of the truth.

The frantic and protracted wailing in which both the Hebrews and the heathens were wont to indulge on such occasions is, perhaps, to be partly accounted for by the fact that they had no prevalent and well-defined faith in the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul. It is probable that the generality of the Jews themselves had no clear views of

the future state, none at best that could be said to amount to knowledge, and that they looked upon death as little, if anything other than annihilation. It is not strange, therefore, that they should have given themselves up to heart-rending cries, and used the most exaggerated methods of expressing their sense of the irreparable calamity that had overtaken them. But now that "our Saviour hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," and the generality give a kind of credence to the revelation, it is time these gloomy and overstrained rites were superseded by such as are agreeable to the serenity and simplicity of our religion. It is time Christianity, in her progresses through this superstitious world, had spoken a language, in some sort, like that of her great Author, when he said to the minstrels and other mourners who were making a great noise in the house of Jairus: "Give place, why make ye this ado and weep? The maid is not dead but sleepeth."

While, however, the Gospel would dissuade us from abandoning ourselves to extreme transports of grief, and the observance of extravagant rites on the occasion of the decease of our friends, it is not to be understood to condemn all weeping for our own losses by death, or from sympathy with others in their bereavements. We are directed to "weep with them that weep." When our Lord stood by the tomb of his friend, his humanity dissolved into a flood of tears, though he must have been conscious of his power to call him back from corruption. It must be conceded, however, that though our knowledge of a future state is clearer and better grounded

than was that of the ancients, we have not greatly the advantage of them in this—that we must in some cases feel painful doubts as to the welfare of the departed soul, and these doubts must more or less embitter the cup of our grief.

There should be nothing in mourning but what is natural and spontaneous. It is equal dissimulation to conceal the sorrow we feel, and to feign the sorrow we cannot feel. Besides, what is more absurd than weeping by rule, and wearing mourning according to a fashion. Were men left to themselves in such matters, the expressions of their grief would be less proportional to their relation to the deceased, than to their sensibility, education, physical constitution, and piety. Woman weeps more easily than man, and the child more easily than the woman. Profound sorrow does not always vent itself in tears, or any other sign of woe, and it would in general be as fallacious to judge what are the feelings of honest people upon the decease of their friends by their demeanor at funerals, as by the costume they wear on these occasions.

The custom of indicating grief by attire probably had its origin in the neglect of personal appearance, which great sorrow naturally induces. Afterwards, the putting on of garments of some uniform color appears to have been thought to denote a disregard of fashion and reputation, and the being overwhelmed with affliction. “Full mourning” alone is strictly or abstractly proper. “Half-mourning” is a solecism, both in word and idea. As to the kind of color, that depends on the custom of the race: and were we divested of all prejudice, we would be at a loss to

determine between black—that adopted by the European, and white, the mourning-color of the Chinese—the former being a destitution of all color, and the latter a composition of all the colors. Unmixed colors must ever be more becoming than those that are mixed; the latter being generally employed to express gayety, to set off beauty, or to give some expression to the general costume by way of contrast or variety. Everything, as to apparel, which implies care and study in the wearer, must be improper. Yet fashion has so far departed from nature that people never more anxiously inquire “wherewithal they shall be clothed,” than at the very time when they ought to be least concerned about such matters. Thus does fashion not only dissipate salutary sorrow, but feed vanity—a vice, the indulgence of which is of all others, the most unfavorable to meditation on death.

Many are justly principled against mourning attire and great pomp and ceremony at funerals, as encouraging prodigality in those who have need to study the strictest economy, or who might devote their abundance to more deserving objects. Some poor people, who think it a capital crime to be out of fashion, expend their last piece of silver in their parting offices to the dead, and even ask alms, that they may pay costly honors to the memory, perhaps, of a departed infant. Fewer of the rich would study magnificence in their obsequies, could they count the numbers that are brought to want by following their example, particularly during the prevalence of epidemics. Against the attendance of great numbers of those who would otherwise be usefully employed,

no sound objection can be brought. Laborers, no less than busy idlers, and the poor, no less than the rich, may very profitably pause to contemplate the chasms death makes in their ranks.

Such are our own views. But as we do not suppose everybody will come over to our opinion—not very soon, at least—we will venture to add some hints as to funerals and mourning, for the accommodation of those who may feel it to be duty to humor the prejudices, and conform to the customs of their fellow-men.

When a member of our family has died, we should immediately give intelligence of the event to the absent relations and friends of the deceased. The letter announcing the death may contain an invitation to assist at the funeral. Cards of invitation to a funeral are most used in cities. In many villages and neighborhoods it is expected that all the friends and acquaintance of the deceased will go to the funeral without receiving a written invitation. Do not appoint any part of the Sabbath as the time for a funeral.

At the hour specified, we repair to the house of the deceased, and follow the body as far as the church. If the deceased was our relation or friend, or if he was poor, a stranger, or friendless, we should accompany his remains to the grave, and it is proper to do so in all other cases. The ladies should stand at a considerable distance from the grave or vault when the procession is large.

The usual order of a common funeral procession is the following: 1st, the sexton; 2d, the clergyman; 3d, the body attended by four or more pall-bearers. When the body is borne in a hearse, the pall-bearers

go in two carriages, either on the right and left of the hearse, or where this is inconvenient, before it; 4th, mourners; 5th, the physician; 6th, friends; 7th, servants. When the military or any society is present, it moves at the head of the procession.

The funerals of persons of distinction are more imposing, and the order of procession too complex to be specified in this work.

At the service and at the interment, the male relations go first, and then those invited. The female relations next; then follow other ladies. The march of the procession should *now* be more slow and quiet than when it passed along the street. During the service at the burial, gentlemen should uncover their heads, and in every part of the obsequies we should be mute.

The chief use of mourning attire is to express our grief and humiliation, and to remind us of our bereavement on those occasions, when we are liable to be gay and thoughtless. It is also a caution to others, not to converse on light or mirthful topics in our presence; yet we should not speak of death to one who wears a weed.

Full mourning is worn for a father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, husband, wife, brother, or sister. Half-mourning is worn for uncles, aunts, cousins, very intimate friends and acquaintance.

It is not customary, except from necessity, for any but half-mourning friends to go to the shops and select articles of mourning, or to procure them made.

During a month after the funeral, the female relatives of the deceased never leave home, unless to go to church, or to transact important business. They

do not visit or dine from home for six weeks after the funeral.

It is not customary for ladies in full or even half-mourning to wear jewelry, curls, or perfumes. They ought also to avoid appearing in a strictly fashionable costume.

It has been customary for a widow to wear mourning for her husband a year and six weeks, and a widower only six months; but present usage leaves the period of wearing black to be determined by the feelings and tastes of the mourners themselves. When persons are married at a time when the former and preferable rule requires the wearing of mourning—which is always an impropriety—they should lay it aside on the day previous to the wedding, and never resume it more. It does not become widows or widowers to bedeck themselves with as much brilliancy at their second nuptials as they did at their first. In making visits of condolence we should talk but little, and in a low, serious tone, never inquiring about the health of persons in mourning. None but grave topics should be introduced during such a visit. If our friends speak in high terms of the character or conduct of our deceased relation, we may assent to what they say, but may add nothing to their eulogiums. To praise our relations is but to praise ourselves. We should speak of the cause of sorrow only when the bereaved is dwelling on it. Such visits should be brief, and should be made during the week following the funeral.

Friends of the deceased, living at a distance, should send letters of condolence to the nearest rela-

tions of the deceased. Nor can the latter be excused from answering them, unless they have given some account of the sickness and death of the deceased in previous letters, when an immediate reply ought not to be expected.

During the mourning of our friends, we should not pay them a visit of ceremony. We should not, at least, for six weeks after the funeral, nor ought we to expect a visit from them during the same time. The bereaved are not however excused from regarding the common rites of hospitality, although the stay of their guests should, on account of their mourning, be as brief as possible. Nor may they refuse to see those calling on them for the purpose of transacting business.

CHAPTER X.

ECCENTRICITIES.

CHRISTIANITY has never been greatly honored by the eccentricities of her votaries. Heathen priests have always used incantations and singularities of voice and mien in order to clothe their impostures with the appearance of divine mystery. Knowing that their systems could never satisfy reason and sobriety, they have made them objects of curiosity and wonder. But shall she who is of heavenly extraction and sent to earth on a mission of mercy, shall she, by whimsical practices, obscure her high origin and become a harlequin. Her compassion, sincerity, and meekness derive no additional charms from wit and drollery. The tragedy of the Royal Sufferer bleeding on a vulgar cross, while the penalties of a world's guilt press ponderously upon his forsaken soul, needs no buffoonery to complete the effect, no comic episodes to make it melt the heart to pity, penitence, and love.

The opinion has too widely obtained, that a natural singularity of manner, by giving novelty to familiar and unsavory truths, recommends them to those who would otherwise have rejected them. But in those religious meetings where levity is indulged, solemn

impressions are usually few and superficial. It sometimes happens indeed, that those who repaired to the house of God to make merry with the oddities of the worshippers, have been there reprov'd for their levity, have shed tears of contrition and received a good hope :

“ As he who seeking asses found a kingdom.”

But how many more might have profited by those sermons, exhortations and prayers, had they been marked by pious sobriety—many whose hearts have been hardened into fixed irreverence, by being taught to trifle amid the awful solemnities of the sanctuary. Sir Walter Scott has somewhere said, that it deserves serious consideration whether, were we to teach religion in the way of sport, our pupils may not thereby be gradually induced to make sport of their religion.

Professors of eccentric habits also provoke the levity of their brethren, and by exciting their disgust, drive them to a conformity with a less spiritual but more polite world. Such, it is probable, was their influence upon the conduct of Swift, whose loathing of religious affectation is discoverable in every part of his writings, and led him to be careless of preserving the reputation of piety. It was an aversion to the ostentatious religion of some persons that induced him to offer family prayer in a garret for fear of being detected in the act of devotion. With numbers it has been more an object of solitude to avoid being branded with the epithets of puritanical and fanatical, on account of the singularities of some who have borne these epithets, than to acquire the virtues for which they were equally distinguished. So that

many who have fled the example of our pious forefathers for fear of copying their uncouth manners, have also departed from the integrity and holiness of their principles.

Such improprieties not only injure others, but they also recoil upon the offender himself. One can hardly be singular without being sensible that he is so; and this impression mingling with his devotional feelings, eventually destroys their seriousness and extinguishes their fervor. The memory does not revert with pleasure to deeds how noble soever in their design, which are marked by impropriety in their execution; much less, as is often the case, when it was committed for the sake of self-display. If in discharging the offices of religion, he is conscious of having gone beyond reason, he will recall those offices with mortification, and return to them with diminished satisfaction.

Oddity is natural to some persons, frequently adhering to their manners after conversion, crippling their religious exertions and marring the symmetry of their Christian character. A natural singularity, however, is pardonable where its possessor is striving to overcome it.²¹ But there is an affectation of singularity which is inconsistent with sincerity and humility. A feigned pretension to an excellence is not

²¹ The pious but whimsical John Berridge used jocularly to say, that he was born with a foolscap on. But in a reply to a letter from Mr. John Thornton, in which the latter reproves him for the use of a queer and vulgar metaphor in public prayer, he says: "Late furnaces have singed the bonnet of my cap, but the crown still abides on my head; and I must confess the crown so abides in whole or in part, for want of a closer walk with God and nearer communion with him. When I creep near the throne, the humor disappears, or is so tempered as not to be distasteful."

so blamable as an affectation of a fault. The former evinces an admiration of good, the latter an attachment to evil. Besides, most persons have so many faults to overcome, that they can ill afford to pretend to such as they do not possess.

He who is powerfully influenced by divine love, may be blind to the frigid calculations of selfish men, he may lay projects of benevolence, which to a cold and earthly mind shall seem altogether visionary, and his reason soar to such unwonted heights, that to grovelling minds it shall appear no longer reason. The Pharisees said of the holy Jesus : " He hath a devil." Felix said to Paul, " Thou art beside thyself;" and many regarded Howard as insane. But shall we rank among these great beings, those who are chiefly distinguished for wit, comicalness, and noise? It will at once be seen that the insanity of the latter differs in its cause and symptoms from that of the former. The singularity of the one is the result of piety, that of the other is only a substitute for it.

Let Christians consider that their great model of moral beauty affords no such blemishes for their imitation, and even his keen-eyed enemies could not detect in him any eccentricity of conduct. Try to imagine Immanuel with whimsical airs and uncouth manners, mixing witicisms and conceits with all his conversations, prayers, and sermons. It is impossible. No one associates such qualities with his ideas of a perfect being. Were we able to discern the faintest shade of the fantastical on that divine pattern, how would it deform its subduing beauty, how degrade its ineffable dignity, how becloud its celestial resplendence. If such things are so foreign from our

faultless example, they must also be unworthy of those who profess to be his imitators.

While it is true that Christians have in general been most persecuted, when they have most closely copied their great pattern, it is equally true that they have sometimes been scourged for their faults. Their virtues have often kindled the fagot, but their blemishes have occasionally awaked doubts, and provoked derision. It was the singularities and inconsistencies of the Puritans in the reign of Charles the Second, and previously to his reign, that provoked Butler to caricature them in his *Hudibras*, and moved Dryden to represent them as hypocrites, rogues and dullards. It was the fanaticism of the Cameronians that supplied follies for the pen of Scott. It was the unguarded speeches and *outré* actions of the pious in the days of the illustrious Wesley and Whitefield that occasioned the scurrilities of the comedian Foote, Bishop Lavington, Vicar Polwhele and others of their kind. It has been the ignorant zeal of some of every denomination in Europe and America that has long furnished themes for the wit of the drawing-room, the club dinner, and the tippling house. And such, to this day, is the prevalence, among some sects, of uncouth customs (too regularly followed to be called eccentricities,) such as ludicrous antics, untimely exclamations, and affected sighs, that if a person utterly ignorant of the Christian religion, were to judge of its nature by observing the manners of some of its professors, he would conclude that in order to be esteemed a Christian a man must needs turn clown or madman. It is in this way that people of the world are led to

regard piety as only another name for fanaticism, and fix upon Christianity a stigma not her own; they come at length to suppose that Godliness is something ridiculous in itself, and consequently mere hypocrisy, since the popular mind readily concludes that to be untrue which has the appearance of absurdity. "This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

These eccentricities are incitements to mirth, and, as such, appear less pardonable in the view of worldly men, from the opinion which prevails among them that sadness, remorse, fear, and other painful feelings are alone becoming the Christian, and of a piece with his forbidding faith. It were easy, indeed, to show that such an opinion is groundless—that the established Christian associates with the Gospel all that is supremely joyful, and that consequently they ought to pardon him for smiling when they think he should weep, and to account even eccentricities which are betrayed by some hopeful and jubilant spirits as not altogether foreign to the condition of those who feel a personal interest in the most gladsome tidings that ever fell on the ear of man. Yet Christians ought to consider that to the eye of the conscious sinner Christianity must ever be discolored by the dark medium through which he sees it, and that when we cannot remove wrong prejudices, though we must not strengthen them, it is advisable not to shock them by a wanton adherence to positive faults.

We do not take upon us to justify the views which the unbelieving world entertain of such conduct, and though we would not take away aught from whatever

of weight may attach to the foregoing considerations, it is worth while to suggest that there is another and important side to this whole subject.

The man of the world who forms his judgments of Christianity on his views of the grotesque conduct of some of its professors, brings to it a very unfair test. No man is authorized to shape his notions of the Gospel religion by the deportment of its professors. When our Master said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," obviously, he did not mean that we should infer the character of the Christian system by the lives of those who embrace it: he meant that we might distinguish the true disciple from the false, by his conduct as tried by the documents of inspiration. From them, and not from the discordant notions of mankind, are we to learn what his Gospel is, and who are his genuine disciples. This plain and reasonable principle is almost always practically denied or overlooked by the mass of unbelievers, and by not a few who profess to believe.

And let the man of the world be pleased to know that the Gospel does not demand his belief on the ground of its beauty as a system—in the esteem of an unchristianized taste, the Grecian and Roman mythology might surpass it in this particular; neither for its antiquity, for the serpent was older than the son of the woman who bruised its head; nor for the learning of its votaries, for the wise, the scribe and the disputer of this world might outdo them here; nor yet for the polish of their manners, for those who stake their eternal interests on an elegant demeanor, at the same time disregarding all the higher virtues, might leave far behind them those who chiefly aim to possess holi-

ness of heart and righteousness of life. The Gospel sets up its claim to his belief on the ground of its *truth* as a revealed proposal of eternal salvation to believers. Upon this ground does this beneficent scheme call for our trust, no matter how or by whom it is heralded or exemplified. No obliquity in the heart or behavior of the messenger, or of those who hear him gladly, can excuse us for making light of the message. A Balaam must not be deaf to the truth, though it be declared by an ass ; and an Ahab, and an Ahaziah must give ear to the words of Elijah, though he be a hairy man and wear a leathern girdle about his loins.

No error as to Christianity, is more common or more fatal than that of mistaking the real objects of faith and affection. Many imagine that they love the unseen Redeemer, when they are, in fact, only enamored of the developments, the appendages, the ritual, the oratory, poetry, music, painting, or sculpture of a visible church ; or the rank, learning, or politeness of its membership. Help Christianity out of her attractive circumstantials, and she no longer has any charms for them. Her celestial birth, her intrinsic beauty, her untold beneficence, cannot save her from being deserted by them. And yet these esthetic additions to the Gospel church do not help to reconcile men to the peculiar doctrines and duties of the Gospel, but are rather a soil where thrives most luxuriantly the vanity which it is one design of the Gospel to uproot and consume. Instead of throwing light on the open pages of revelation, they cast shadows upon them, or turn away our eyes from those pages to contemplate their own mummeries. It is

easier to conciliate taste to our forms than to win the heart to our God. It is easier to attract the world around us by the graces of our deportment or the splendor of our attire, than to lead them to the feet of the bleeding and dying Nazarene by any means whatsoever.

Were eccentricity peculiar to believers, the man of gentility might find in that fact the shadow of a plea for rejecting their faith. He might say, 'a system that is the sole parent of irregularity cannot be of Divine original.'—But, in truth, eccentricity shows itself in persons of every character, culture and order. Men of taste are as deeply infected with it as coarse-minded men, and the ungodly equally with the pious. Would not the dainty rejecter of the Gospel religion do well to inquire whether eccentricity be not rather a freak of nature than of our religion, whether nature has not engendered it for our religion, instead of our religion for nature, and whether he ought not to seek in his own disordered heart the seeds of all that is fantastical, erratic, and monstrous, and reproach himself, and those who are on his side with the faults which he imputes to the pious, but which are only associated with the depravity that lingers with them, and only abound where grace has not yet prevailed?

But do not your men of refinement like too well what custom, and perhaps their own sense of propriety, compels them to complain of? Is it not manifest that the eccentricities of professors are the only things connected with sincere piety that they highly relish? Are they not even *dilettanti* of this fine art? Do they not actually patronize it by often resorting to

the religious assemblies where it is to be witnessed? Do they not find a great deal of diversion in those very irregularities which they speak of with affected sneers and airs of disdain? By crowding to suffocation the places where pious drolleries are to be seen, while they desert the house of sober worshippers, do they not encourage mistaken, but well-meaning men to pander to their appetite, with the hope of thereby raising them to noble aspirations? It ill becomes them to condemn so unsparingly what they are themselves the occasion of, and what they would have nothing to do with were it changed for the better. Were they as cordially reconciled to the requirements of the Gospel, as they are to these imperfections of its professors, they would soon come to be men of no doubtful piety, and no narrow usefulness. Remove these faults, and if it were possible all other faults, from the lives of the pious, and these men would still find abundant cause to dislike them and their piety. They would dislike them for the sake of their godliness, and they would dislike their godliness for its own sake. An English clergyman once well observed, respecting Mrs. Hannah More, "We see in her instance that every attempt to gain and secure the world's favor is utterly vain, if you support real religion and act upon it yourself. Look at Hannah More—at her genius, popularity, influence, abjuration of cant and bad taste, and her innocence of everything that can disgust mankind; the friend of Garrick, Johnson, Reynolds, and of all their envied circles, and see what treatment the best adorned piety will ever meet with from the world."

CHAPTER XI.

CANT.

“PERHAPS,” says Swift, “I may one day oblige the world with my critical essay on the art of canting; philosophically, physically, and musically considered.” And every one who realizes how much religion has suffered by the cant of its professors, must regret that he did not lend to the subject he has proposed the force of his surpassing wit. The day is past, perhaps, when such an essay was needed most: yet even in our own times a hint on this subject may be useful to some who have insensibly formed the habit of canting.

Cant is to be found among men of all ranks, parties, professions, and crafts. Not a few glory in it, and those circles and coteries that profess to hate it and to keep clear of it, have fallen into it unawares by their very efforts to shun it. Only theirs is not the cant of the vulgar. It partakes of the refinement, a reputation for which, they are concerned to keep up. Those belonging to these secular orders, who are pious, bring their peculiar way of speaking to the aid of their religion, so that one can sometimes divine what rank, profession, or vocation one is of, by hearing him talk on the subject of religion. There

can be no objection against a man of any degree or calling using his own dialect as a vehicle of spiritual ideas, so he holds in due respect the requirements of propriety and taste, and does not handle sacred themes with irreverent familiarity.

Besides this secular cant, which is perceptible in members of all denominations, there is a sort of religious cant, which is peculiar to denominations, sects, and theological parties. There is none, however, which is peculiar to Christians in general, and as such ; and this fact goes to show that it has its source in the infirmities of human nature, rather than in the graces of the Spirit : and encourages the hope that when sects shall be no more, cant will soon disappear. As the case now stands, one denomination in the endeavor to shun the verbal peculiarities of another, acquire a cant of their own, opposite, in fact, to what they aim to avoid, and in their opinion no way objectionable,—still a cant which is very grating to the ears of those who are of a different name. The cant of a denomination commonly takes its tone from peculiarities of faith, practice, or polity, and could not in many cases be removed without disturbing deep-seated prejudices. This cant is often fostered by fond recollections, or a reverence for the great and the antique : and as it commonly serves the purpose of a watchword or a battle-cry, the generality think that the moment one renounces it, he must needs give up all the principles that are usually leagued with it, and thenceforth forfeit every claim to orthodoxy. The best apology for it is, that it is sometimes convenient, and that it is not easy to keep clear of it ; its condemnation is that it contradicts the

spirit of the Gospel, by showing a desire for peculiarity for its own sake, that it is apt to be mistaken for and received as a substitute for piety, and that it strengthens some in their ungodliness, by giving them occasion for turning religious solemnities into farces and comedies—a work to which they are naturally but too prone.

Personal cant, or that which is peculiar to individual Christians, is very common, and to this source is to be traced a great deal of denominational cant; inasmuch as the founder or leader of a sect almost always gives his manners as well as his tenets to his disciples. In the same way, a master in Israel, or some popular preacher, gives the key-note to numbers of his clerical or laical admirers. Men of ardor and sensibility are exceedingly liable to contract a canting habit. As they exercise more feeling than thought, they acquire a habit of repeating set words and phrases, and as every passion has its tone, that which is strongest determines the note or strain used; this comes at length to be invariably used in giving utterance to all emotions and passions whatever. To speak these words and phrases with a characteristic whining, snuffling, or muttering, constitutes the perfection of cant.

In order to avoid canting, monotony should be shunned, especially in praying. The tones of the worshipper should vary with the sentiments he expresses. There may be a drowsy sameness in loud as well as in low sounds. All unnecessary exertion of the organs in praying or speaking, serves to confirm odd and unnatural tones.

We are much the creatures of imitation in this

matter. Many Christians indicate by their tones the denomination of which they are members. And if some authorities are to be credited, time was when among certain sects a doctrine could scarce pass for orthodox unless it was delivered through the nose, and a person was not esteemed sufficiently pious until he had attained to some proficiency in the art of whining.²² And from the popularity of canting among some good people, even at this day, one would conclude that such notions were not yet wholly exploded; for although we do not always hear the unrestrained whine and song-like tone, and quaint and affected pronunciation, so common in a former age, and in the parent-land, yet many in this country practise a sing-song which is quite dolorous and untunable, while some have such skill in the art, that they could have been scarcely equalled by Andrew Cant himself.²³

Some have even carried their canting from religious assemblies into the intercourse of secular life; so that they not only disturb the ears of those who go to their places of worship, by their canting prayers, but daily annoy all who hear them, by their canting way of talking. These are they who drag into all their communications, whether spoken or written, the words and phrases of Scripture, and by

²² Butler, whose language is doubtless exaggerated, says that some could,

“By the sound and twang of nose,
If all be sound within disclose;
Free from crack and flaw of sinning,
As men try pipkins by the ringing.”

²³ From Andrew Cant and his son Alexander, seditious preaching and praying in Scotland were called canting.

their quaint style and puritanical pronunciation, have done more than anybody else to multiply itching ears, and render the good old Saxon of the Bible obsolete and insipid.

Others speak naturally enough on secular topics, but with extreme affectation on the subject of religion. Sensible that their feelings come far short of the demands of the subject or the occasion, they are unwilling to be suspected of any lukewarmness. They torture their words and features in penance for their insensibility, and compensate for the lack of a solemn mind by a solemn manner. But, at the same time, far be it from me, and far be it from my brethren, to commend that pertness which can discourse with equal indifference upon the concerns of eternity and the history of a ring, or that fluency which never staggers under the weight of overpowering thoughts. The smooth and playful speech of the pious trifler

“To me is odious as the nasal twang
Heard at conventicle, where worthy men
Misled by custom, strain celestial themes
Through the pressed nostril, spectacle bestrid.”

CHAPTER XII.

R A N T.

A ZEALOUS but ignorant son of Ham, in one of our Southern states, having exhorted a congregation with more rapture than reason, at the close of the service an auditor gravely observed to a friend: "It may be, sir, that the Lord understood what that brother was saying; I did not." Were none but Jehovah to hear our prayers, incoherence and raving might seem less blameworthy—even then it is questionable whether He would not cast a more propitious eye on the petitioner did he not so abuse His own gift of speech. But since in social worship the prayer of one is to be the prayer of all, and the begging of one, by reminding another of the same poverty induces that other to beg also, it is of some importance that the speaker be distinctly understood by all the other worshippers. "In the church," says the apostle Paul, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Would that such were the preference of some modern believers, a likeness of whom is seen in Butler's description of "An hypocritical non-conformist." We copy it, not as approving every line of the limner,

but as showing in what light men of the world view ranting.

“The zealous pangs and agonies,
 The heavenly turnings of the eyes;
 The groans with which he piously destroys
 And drowns the nonsense in the noise,
 And grows so loud as if he meant to force
 And take in heaven by violence;
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 Until he falls so low and hoarse
 No kind of carnal sense
 Can be made out of what he means.”

To pray with a voice unnecessarily loud, is to make ludicrous what should be serious. The prophet Elijah ridiculed the prophets of Baal for their vain vociferations, and Lucian amuses his readers by representing Diogenes boisterously praying to Jupiter. We never hear such a bawling petitioner without thinking him analogous to a stubborn child crying after its unheeding mother. When the terms used are not the natural outpouring of deep feeling it is a sort of hypocrisy—a pretension to holy passions not cherished. Some quote Scripture in defence of their clamor, but a careful study of it would lead them to suit the pitch of their voice to persons, places, and circumstances. It was fit that on the great day of the feast, while a procession was bearing water from the pool of Siloam to the altar, Jesus should stand and “cry”: “If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink,” but this was not his manner on all occasions: he did not habitually “cry or cause his voice to be heard in the streets.” It was fit that the blind man, who could not easily be heard amidst a

noisy multitude, should call after Jesus "with a loud voice," and the leper, when he found himself healed should glorify God "with a loud voice." Yet it would not have become either of them to offer their daily prayers to Omnipresence in so high a tone. It was fit that when the multitudes bore the Son of David in triumph into Jerusalem, they should make the heights of Olivet give back their loud hosannahs, but the gentle Jesus would have rebuked the person who had dared to shout at the wonders of the transfiguration, or during the agonies of Gethsemane.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN SOCIABILITY.

CHRISTIAN courtesy cannot be successfully cultivated without the aid of Christian intercourse. It is only in the society of the brethren that the milder and more amiable virtues of the renewed man are made to unfold the highest charms, and to exert the most benign influence. Those professors who neglect the social prayer circle and brotherly call, only meeting one another on the Sabbath, do not in general acquire that gentleness and affability of manners which adorn the character of the more sociable Christian. It is a matter of common regret that a more symmetrical development of the graces is not furnished by the generality of religious people. Each one stands, it may be, unrivalled in some one excellence, but is very defective in other required qualities. This disproportion among the virtues is mostly discoverable among the solitary, the retiring, and all who, from inclination or necessity, live without the refining contact of pious acquaintance. Some remedy for the evil might be found in a more intimate and frequent intercourse among the members of churches, each of whom, by the exhibition of his good qualities, would mend the opposite defects in

others, and by occasionally betraying his bad qualities would lead others to shun them. So that while no one perfect model could be found, a combination of the most beautiful features in each could produce a pattern of Christian conduct to which all would gradually and almost insensibly conform. Is not this the method by which the members of some churches have attained such eminence in the gentler virtues? And is it not by reason of their so frequent and sociable intercourse among themselves, that the highest classes in the society of the world have always been so distinguished for their gentility?

Unsociableness always leads to ignorance, rudeness and vice. This is true not only of churches, but of villages, cities, and even of whole countries. It sufficiently accounts for the anarchy and barbarism of the inhabitants of Laish, that "they had no business with any man." And we can easily imagine how Homer's giants could be lawless cannibals and one-eyed dullards, when we are informed that they lived apart in caves on the tops of the loftiest mountains, and held no friendly intercourse with one another.

The secluded Christian is liable to grow self-ignorant and self-righteous. Neglecting to compare his moral character with that of others, as he might usefully do by keeping up a friendly commerce with them, he comes at length to fancy that he is better than they. Were he to go into the assemblies of the pious, he might see some of his fellow-disciples of whose piety he had not been accustomed to cherish a high opinion, discovering amidst influences adverse to godliness, the most admirable traits of Christian excellence. The recluse is apt to conclude that his

passions are subdued by divine grace when they are only lulled to repose by the stillness of solitude. Let such an one expose his saintly heart to the trials of society, and he will be despoiled of his spiritual pride and be compelled to say, "I have seen an end of all perfection." Not that a Christian should expose himself to all sorts of temptation with a view to obtain the strongest practical evidence of remaining depravity, but that he should frequent those companies of his brethren where he will behold others whom he must regard far from perfect, surpassing him in the very virtues upon which he most plumes himself; where, by a discovery of his own faults, he may mend them; and by contemplating the graces of others, he may make them his own.

Were members of the same church and of different churches better acquainted with each other, there would be less silent suspicion and secret enmity among them—feelings they sometimes so long conceal in their own bosoms, that it is equally difficult to tell whence they arose and how they may be subdued. The faults of the godly may be detected upon a slight acquaintance with them, but it requires a long intimacy to form a just estimate of their virtues. To the eye of the imagination, the smallest blemish in the character is magnified in proportion to the distance of the point whence it is viewed; and the most winning beauties of the good, when seen from afar, sometimes appear frightful deformities.

Some town churches are not so much brotherhoods as strangerhoods. The members hold no affable and friendly communion with one another. They maintain a mutual reserve which would not be endured in

any secular society. Professedly the disciples of a Master who originated a new command requiring brotherly love, they do not so much as know whether their dear brethren have any amiable qualities or not. They shun each other in the intercourse of secular life, and never exchange those acts of kindness and offices of courtesy which are the very bonds and knots of fraternal affection. The new convert who leaves the hearty and confiding associations of the world and comes into their fellowship, is chilled by an atmosphere of reserve and suspicion. His loneliness in his new relation is not unlike that of Zobeide of Arabian story, who is represented wandering alone among the petrified retinue of a palace.

“Amid the gathered throng no sound was heard,
Nor parting lips breathed forth the welcome word;
There beamed no smile, there rose no bitter sigh,
And soulless was the gaze of every eye.” P. D. G.

In most churches, however, the newly received convert will find no difficulty in forming acquaintances if he has a lively concern for the common cause, and resorts to all the meetings of the brethren. He need not hope to domesticate himself in the church, by only appearing in its promiscuous congregations once or twice on Sunday. Exemplary members do not, on that day, divert their minds from their holy duties by presentations and conversations. Let the new-comer frequent the prayer-meetings, the Sunday-school, the week-day lecture, the business meeting; and if a female, the Dorcas society, and the maternal association. His presence in these more social gatherings will be his best recommendation to the confi-

dence of his brethren, and will presently win for him the love of all the most excellent and faithful among his fellow-disciples.

Next to the cultivation of a more, active and prayerful piety, something like the ancient "Agape" or "feast of charity," would greatly serve to banish unsociableness from many churches. If, as is customary in some city churches, the members would meet once a month in winter, and once in two months during summer, to converse on morals, religion, benevolent institutions, and other subjects of common interest, they would not long be deficient in brotherly love. These meetings, like the feasts of charity among primitive Christians, might be opened by prayer, and closed by prayer and singing. If it took place in the evening, the customs of American society would render collations and all refreshments needless. With some such method of social communion, the harmony and efficiency of the church would be promoted. So that in the exercise of all the tenderness and sympathy of true fellowship, their pastors might appropriately congratulate them in the language of the apostle Paul to the church of Ephesus: "Now are ye no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God."

When a brother is received into a church by letter or otherwise, it is the duty of the members to request a presentation to him. If none of the laymen are acquainted with him, it is courteous for the pastor to present them to him. But when this is inconvenient, two or more members may alternately present each other to him. The sisters may observe the same

rule when a female stranger is added to their number. The neglect of these forms of recognition so common in modern churches was not known among primitive believers. To the courtesies due to their brethren they were very attentive. So ardent was the mutual love, and so becoming was their expression of it, that it distinguished them from the heathens, while it called forth their admiration. Some part of the closing chapters of most of the epistles of Paul, and nearly all of the last chapter of that to the Romans, are devoted to salutations and compliments. In the journey of this apostle from Athens to Jerusalem, he landed at Cæsarea for no other purpose, than his biographer has mentioned, than to salute the church in that city. He also directed his converts to greet one another with a "holy kiss." This had among the primitive disciples a specific meaning. It was expressive of brotherly love and union. By this the convert after being baptized, was welcomed to the sympathy, affection and guardianship of the Church. They greeted one another with this kiss just before they gathered around the table of their Lord. It was with this that every Christian received his wayfaring brother under his protection, and welcomed him to his hospitalities. No matter if they were entire strangers to each other; if they differed widely in country and culture and rank, this was the expressive mark of brotherly endearment, and the inviolable pledge of mutual subjection and protection.

The Christian should not require of his brother so formal a presentation as men of the world demand of each other; nay, there are occasions when he

should ask none at all. To know that another is a fellow-disciple, should be thought a sufficient pledge of his worth, and to know that he cherishes the same faith and hope is assurance enough that his acquaintance, though it should not be the most agreeable, will be neither dishonorable nor pernicious. Persons of nearly equal spiritual attainments, may be so diverse in tastes, talents, and pursuits, that they can derive little pleasure from one another's society. Each should consider the preferences of the other, and if he has reason to think his society would not be agreeable to another, he should allow him to make the first advances towards an acquaintance and if the latter should never make them, he should not regard it as an indication of a lack of fraternal love. Kindred spirits in all societies blend by the most easy and unassuming means. A man of inferior parts and attainments ought not to suppose that a spiritual equality with his more gifted brother entitles him to all the privileges of a social equality with him. The apostolic command is: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called." The Scriptures nowhere encourage impertinence and disrespect towards superiors, or superciliousness and contempt towards inferiors. When a Christian of high social rank, who is truly courteous and deserving of the rank he occupies, discovers that his brother of lower degree is qualified for a higher social sphere, he will cheerfully come down from his place, and with his own hands place before his feet the stepping-stone to an eminence in society equal to his merits and his capacity of enjoyment.

A prolific source of unsociableness among Christian

brethren, is the partiality of members of wealth and rank to one another, and the partiality of officers in the church towards them. In a Church of Christ assembled as such, no member is entitled to exclusive privileges. Mere external circumstances of wealth, social, literary, or political distinction ought not to confer upon any one a single advantage over the poor, the unbefriended, the unlettered, and the obscure; not so much as the enjoyment of better pews than those occupied by the latter. It is contrary to an explicit admonition of the apostle James: "If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel; and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou here, or sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" The courteous Christian cannot desire or accept any superiority of power or place in the house of God by the mere virtue of his external advantages. Whatever there may be elsewhere, in the sacred assembly at least, let there be neither arrogance nor envy; "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich that he is made low."

PART III.

THE FORMS OF COURTESY IN SECULAR SOCIETY.

People are of course at liberty to disregard, or modify, according to circumstances, some of the rules laid down in this part of the work. But they cannot always do it with entire impunity. Many of the conventional forms of society, like the common law of the land, are enforced by the authority of ancient usage and the sanction of universal reason. Let not the reader imagine, therefore, that the author sets himself up as a lawgiver in these matters. He has in many instances but codified those laws which are observed by the mass of well-bred people, who alone are to be regarded as "the makers of manners."

CHAPTER I.

HONOR AND PRECEDENCE.

No precept of the Decalogue is, perhaps, so little understood, or so often violated at this day, as the fifth, and many of those who are really desirous to know what the duty is which it enjoins, interpret it literally, and content themselves with an adherence to the letter of the command, overlooking the truth that this, like many other Scripture injunctions, gives a single instance, under a moral precept, which covers a wide range of kindred duties. When Jehovah said to Israel, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," He is, to be understood to enjoin, among other things, all those marks of respect which inferiors owe to superiors, and to touch upon that great law of honor, written on the hearts of all mankind, which requires deference and submission, not only from children to their parents, but from wives to their husbands, servants to their masters, subjects to their rulers, church-members to their pastors, etc. Other precepts scattered through the sacred writings, and which will readily occur to any one, also look toward the same law.

Not a few think it a sufficient apology for their contemptuous bearing towards superiors, that their character or conduct is such as to make it impossible to feel respect for them. But they should know that this command regards not so much the inward feelings, as it does the outward behavior, and that it binds us to do homage to the age, relation, office, and rank of those faults that do not entitle them to our inward respect. So long as they sustain toward us the relation of superiors, they may claim our honor irrespective of our opinions concerning them. Though the intoxication of Noah was and ought to have been disgusting to Ham, it did not mitigate his curse for having dishonored his father by his improper deportment, nor keep God from driving his posterity, the Canaanites, out of the land which the Lord their God had given them. The Israelite was commanded *without qualification* to rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man, and the youthful Elihu did not think it decorous to interrupt Job and his three friends, though their reasonings had, as he thought, done violence to the truth, had offended his piety, and kindled his wrath. Paul promptly apologized for the opprobrious language he had unwittingly used, in addressing Ananias, the high priest, though that language showed that he felt no respect for his moral character.

Since all nations are now beginning to "hold these truths to be self-evident," that all men are created socially equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are the luxuries of life, liberty to disregard all

rules of respect, and the pursuit of happiness at the expense of the happiness of others, many may, perhaps, regard it as a piece of information more curious and antique than useful and practical, that time was when there were in use such words as "superior" and "inferior," that they were used in speaking of persons, and that children actually were taught the difference between them. Many persons belonging to that generation are still living, and may their shadow never be less ! For the sake of these and of those having come into the world at a more recent date, who may have some lingering scruples about honor and precedence, we offer the following observations :

Precedence is determined by title, birth, rank in profession, age, sex, marriage, and hospitality. For a specification of the rights of precedence due to the various ranks of the English nobility, the reader may consult Blackstone's Commentaries, or some work on heraldry. In this country, where heraldic rules are not followed, except when titled foreigners are of the party, the stranger takes the place of all others, and, in his absence, the first place is awarded to the aged. None but *very* aged *ladies*, however, are to be offered the precedence in virtue of their years. Ladies take the precedence of gentlemen. But when a lady is serving a circle of ladies and gentlemen, she should serve gentlemen first, and in addressing them collectively she should say, "gentlemen and ladies." A gentleman, on the contrary, always gives ladies the first place in service and address. There is high authority, we are aware, for ladies giving precedence to their own sex, but a moment's

reflection must convince any one that this is a solecism in manners. Married people take place of single. The mere man of fortune has no particular place assigned him by the laws of precedence. He is, in general, expected to yield the pass to gentlemen of the learned professions, literati, and artists. For the rules of rank and precedence observed in the literary world, the reader is referred to No. 529 of the *Spectator*, written by Mr. Addison. Though he treats the subject in a vein of blended seriousness and humor, he is really recording the ceremonial which was in his day, and is still regarded by some literary men, on certain festive occasions. For the information of those who may not happen to know it, we would add, that the table of precedence is not arranged on the scale of personal merit, so that all cause of jealousy and heart-burnings is happily precluded. We should always, when we are at liberty to do it, choose the lowest place, remembering the divine precept, "When thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room." When a superior offers us a place, to which we are not entitled, we should take it immediately. It is said that when Louis XIV. once requested an English nobleman to enter his coach before him, the nobleman declined the honor. Whereupon the king mounted his seat, ordered the door to be shut, and rode off, leaving the polite lord to his own meditations.

Somebody, we know not who, has said in substance, that laws of precedence are as needful to the good order of society as the law of attraction is to preserve the heavenly bodies in their appointed orbits. As one star differs from another in magni-

tude and splendor, according to the destiny it has to fulfill in the universe, so are the rank and station of men proportional to the duties they have to perform among mankind. And as in astronomy we do not despise Mercury because he is not as large as Saturn, nor our own earth because she has not four moons, like Jupiter, so we do not esteem our equals or inferiors the less, because they do not occupy the first places in society. All ranks are the most useful in their proper place, and we cannot help respecting the individuals of any rank in proportion as they perform aright their respective duties.

CHAPTER II.

SALUTATIONS.

No mortal is so low or so base as to be beneath a salutation, and none so high or so good as to omit one with impunity. But for this and other forms of civility, the intercourse of men would be as rude and informal as that of brutes. Faulty as these forms may be, they have obtained universal observance among men, and even angels, direct from the court of heaven, whenever they have made themselves visible to us, have in this respect deigned to conform to the usages of human intercourse. The celestial ministers who were entertained by the hospitality of Abraham and Lot, were not surpassed in good breeding by those illustrious gentlemen themselves. And the angel of the annunciation prefaced the message he delivered with a courteous salutation and a gracious compliment.

The salutation is sometimes used by men of the world as a defence against the advances of the impertinent, and those who would not be agreeable acquaintance. The politeness of the world suffers us, by a mock and excessive civility, to wound the feelings of the unconscious aggressor. It is so inconsistent with itself that it directs us to treat others in a manner we would be very unwilling to be treated

ourselves, and to transgress the very rules we require others to obey. But evangelical courtesy does not arrogate to herself the power of punishing those who may deserve it, by any severity of bearing or address. She turns the unsmitten cheek to the smiter, and cordially salutes them that refuse to salute her. Our meek Lord courteously addressed his betrayer thus—“*Friend*, wherefore art thou come?” We should not, except in cases of personal violence, charge another with an injury or insult at the time of the act. Our provoked temper might inflame that of the offender to a degree that would render the hurt quite incurable. And even after reconciliation has been sought in vain, courtesy does not allow the parties to omit a salutation, or to avoid looking at each other when they meet. Yet we should not feign respect with a view to disguise hatred or contempt. Whenever the ancient nobles of Spain met the upstart grandees, they made them very low bows, and addressed them by their high-sounding titles, treating them with the most polite disdain; but in their intercourse with one another they laid aside all ceremony, and assumed the free and familiar behavior of equals and friends. Such conduct does not comport with the simplicity of Christian courtesy.

When we are in the company of our acquaintance, we should carefully avoid making our intimate friends very conspicuous by greeting them with a great deal more warmth, or showing them many more attentions than we do others. And while paying our compliments to a clergyman, or other public person, we should not approach him in a manner which shows we esteem ourselves his favorites, even

when we know that we are. Whoever seeks to be either the recipient or dispenser of exclusive favors is as selfish as he makes himself offensive.

We ought generally, however, to make *some* distinction, slight though it be, in our behavior towards persons who sustain different relations to us. We must not shake hands with every one, nor doff the hat to all. To some we need only touch the hat, to others, waive the hand; to others we make a mere inclination of the head. To shake hands with a strong gripe, or by presenting one or two fingers, is contemptuous familiarity. To address *all* with *great* cordiality, is the way to secure the confidence of none. We do not highly prize a heart which we see cast at the feet of every one.

Our expressions of respect ought always to be suitable to the age, rank, and other relations of the person addressed. We should avoid familiarity toward superiors, disrespect to equals, and a contempt for inferiors. The inspired precept is, "Honor all men," and this applies as well to the feeblest, as to the mightiest of mankind.

It is a good old usage for a pastor to "give his blessing" to any member of his flock, or other layman, who is taking leave of him when about to go a journey, or commence an important enterprise. A senior layman may, on a like occasion, bless a junior, who should thank him for the benediction, and not bless him in return; "without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better."

There are a few who think it unscriptural to salute a neighbor. They affirm that the command of our Divine Master ought to be literally obeyed. But He

did not mean by this injunction to forbid every form of greeting : he would, in figurative language, only signify to his disciples that they should make all expedition in executing the great designs of their mission, and when they saluted a person, not scrupulously observe all those punctilios practised by the Jews of those times. That he did not intend to interdict every kind of salutation, is clear, from that other precept : “ When ye come into an house, salute it.”²⁴ Nay, our Lord required his disciples to extend their civilities to others beside their brethren : “ If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others ? Do not even the publicans so ?”²⁵ Christians, therefore, are bound to be more liberal of their salutations than people of the world are accustomed to be. All the forms of salutation now in common use, are at least expressions of affection and good-will. Some of them originated in pious benevolence. The salutations “ Adieu,” “ Good-bye,” “ Good morning,” etc., were at first, it is probable, intended as invocations of divine protection and support ; so that both the natural feeling of humanity and Christian charity seem to claim the salutation as the proper vehicle of their kind desires.

²⁴ Matt. 10 : 12.

²⁵ Matt. 23 : 47.

CHAPTER III.

DEPORTMENT IN THE STREET.

ALL improprieties of behavior in the street being offences against Christian courtesy, and liable to public exposure and ridicule, there need be no apology for offering some suggestions on the subject.

Do not go into the street until you are completely dressed. Your cloak, or shawl, and even your gloves, should be adjusted before you open the street door.

Never go into the street with a cigar or pipe in your mouth. No person having just ideas of cleanliness and decency, ever smoked in any public place or conveyance. It would be difficult to decide which is the more selfish creature: he who pollutes the pure atmosphere of heaven with the sickening fumes which are puffed from his filthy mouth, or he who reels about the street, taking both sides of the walk along with him, and dashing against everybody that tries to get past him. When, as is often the case, the blended fumes of tobacco and liquor envelop a drunkard, they make him the loathsome monopolizer of both earth and air. Never smoke in a city, unless standing in the company of chimneys, on a fire-proof roof, and never in the country unless wandering far from all human haunts and habitations.

When a lady, an aged person, or any one deserv-

ing deference meets you, give her the side next the wall. This rule may be violated only in a street so thronged that people are compelled to pass one another on the right. If you are giving your arm to a lady, permit her to take the side next the wall; but if you are frequently turning corners you need not scrupulously observe this usage. On a staircase always give a lady, but never a gentleman superior, the wall.

When you find a number of ladies at the entrance of a public conveyance, wait until they are all on board. To crowd before them because they happen to be unattended, and are not your acquaintance is discourteous. Offer them your assistance, but be not officiously attentive to them. Ladies should always thank gentlemen for such services.

In passing gutters over which a narrow slab is laid it is not courteous to crowd before another who is ready to go over, or to jump over at the side of the slab while another is crossing upon it. When a lady is about to cross, a gentleman, who has reason to think his services would be agreeable to her, may pass over before her, and offer her his hand. If you are in the street with an umbrella during a storm, offer to share it with any respectable person going the same way without one. If the person goes farther than yourself, shelter him to his own door. Avoid striking your umbrella against those who are passing by looking out for those coming towards you.

If you meet an acquaintance salute him; in many villages it is customary to salute every one a person meets. When you meet a gentleman of your acquaintance accompanied by a lady, take off your hat

to him; but if he is alone and be your equal, it is the usage in some cities and villages to bow, and touch your hat; to nod merely is disrespectful to ladies. If while walking with a friend, you meet an acquaintance, do not present them unless you are convinced that a presentation would be agreeable to both. When you are in company with a distinguished friend and meet an acquaintance, be not ashamed to salute him, even if he should be your meanest slave. If you meet a lady or gentleman who is your superior give such an one the privilege of first recognizing you and saluting you. If he speaks to you, and stops you for conversation, it is his duty to take leave first; if a gentleman stops to talk with a lady, she should always close the interview. Do not stand long conversing in the street, or near doors, or staircases.

If you meet an acquaintance carrying anything, do not inquire what he has, nor manifest the slightest curiosity about it, or if he should leave a friend with whom he is walking, in order to converse with you aside, do not ask him who he has with him. If you overtake persons of your acquaintance walking together, do not join them unless they request you to do so. When you meet an acquaintance do not ask him where he has been, nor whither he is going. Never ask a person whom you meet on Sunday, whether he has been to church, or where, nor say that you have been to such a church, but did not see him there.

Cheerfully show any person a street, when he asks this favor, and if he can more easily understand your directions by your going a short distance with him, do so. When another has shown you the way thank him for his kindness.

Avoid jostling and being jostled in a narrow or thronged street, by turning sidewise, or contracting your arms, at the same time watching the direction others are taking. Do not occupy more of the walk than others, by flourishing your cane or swinging your arms at large. Be so much of a soldier as to turn out your toes, but not so much of a boxer as to clench your fists.

When you meet two or more persons abreast, who are not your superiors, you are permitted to pass them on the side next the wall, and if the way is narrow it is the duty of one of the company to fall behind the rest and let you pass. If you are a gentleman walking with another gentleman, who is giving his arm to a lady, walk by the side of the lady, so that she may be guarded on either hand: if you pass a gentleman and lady who are your equals, go by on the side of the lady, if your superiors, give them the wall. If you are to walk with several ladies give your arm to the eldest.

If you stand at a door waiting to be admitted, do not look at the door, or if it be open, into the entry. "A fool," saith the son of Sirach, "will peep in at the door into the house, but he that is well nurtured will stand without." Do not stare people full in the face, nor cast your eyes carelessly or inquisitively around you; "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." Never look at people through a window, unless they are close by it, when, if your friend or acquaintance within salute you, return the salutation.

"Look not behind thee in the streets of the city, neither wander thou in the solitary places thereof."

CHAPTER IV.

TRAVELLING.

THE art of travelling it is difficult to acquire. In journeying, the Christian is united with his companions by peculiar relations, and the duties he owes to them vary with the most minute circumstances. When he travels in public conveyances, he meets with persons of every kind and condition, among whom he must sustain his character, not only as a man, but also as a Christian.

When travelling as a man of business and passing over his route with the utmost speed, he is liable to be less attentive to the means of grace, and to relax his habits of watchfulness and prayer than when he is at home. With a view to economize time, he sometimes travels in the night, when he is asleep, or if awake, drowsy and restless. If he journeys by day, he may generally be distinguished from those who travel for other objects, by his unsocial and retiring mood. He is in danger of indulging impatience and fretfulness, upon the slightest annoyance from his fellows, or from servants who may be more wakeful and noisy than himself. Accidents and delays, extortions and neglects, are additional occasions of irritation and complaint. Hence he needs the safeguard

of a devotional spirit, else he will dishonor his profession and misrepresent religion.

The Christian who travels for other purposes than those of business, while he is liable in common with the man of business to become the victim of petty vexations, he is also exposed to temptations from another quarter. Among other bad habits he is in danger of contracting, are those of indolence. If he is not accompanied by acquaintance with whom he may pass his time in conversation, he will be inclined to waste his time in vagaries and reveries. It is now that the tempter finds easy access to his heart, inducing him to forget the divine testimonies, and to yield himself to the wanderings and soarings of a lawless imagination. Or perhaps he seeks entertainment in the circle of the thoughtless and the undevout; and without pondering his path, he familiarizes himself with persons unworthy of his society, and becomes intoxicated with the cup of levity. Unless he can form an acquaintance with some pious or sober-minded person, he should engage much of his attention in reading his Bible, or some other spiritual or intellectual book. While journeying in cars or coaches, he may engage his mind in surveying the works of nature and art among which he is moving. He cannot for an hour look on the variegated landscape which turns before his eye, without elevating his views of the wisdom, skill, power, and benevolence of the earth's great Architect and Supporter. The Christian may extract from such scenes themes of serious and beneficial meditation.

He may also use them as occasions of starting serious conversation. The landscape will oftentimes

not only suggest the subject, but afford the most happy illustrations of it. He will meet with worldly men who will freely converse with him, and who might not be accessible in other circumstances. The only time some people of the world allow themselves to think seriously is while they are travelling. These are golden moments, and if the Christian faithfully and judiciously employs them, he may, with the divine co-operation, make them to some benighted soul the dawn of an endless day.

The Christian traveller should always be watching for souls. Before setting out he should provide himself with Testaments, tracts, and other evangelical books. These he may slip into the hands of such individuals as he is not able to converse with, or whose convictions he desires to deepen by additional appeals. His success in this work will depend, next to his spirituality, on his courtesy and knowledge of the world. He ought always to introduce the subject with unobtrusiveness, humility, and gentleness. He should avoid, as much as possible, sectarian views and every appearance of cant. Many travellers converse on the subject of religion more candidly and freely with a stranger, than with their most intimate friends, provided the conversation is carried on apart from the rest of the passengers. The subject of religion should never be introduced to one member of a promiscuous circle. If an individual is not disposed to converse with us singly and quietly, we should courteously waive the topic. A noisy dispute should ever be avoided. A calm discussion, however, may be very properly introduced among a group of travellers. When two persons are

engaged in arguing a question, others should not enter the lists without leave of the original disputants.

. Besides the subject of religion, history, biography, and anecdote may properly enliven the traveller's hours. The men, and events of other countries and times may be handled with most safety. He should be at peace with himself and all the world ; eschewing remarks and anecdotes which reflect on the character of persons, parties, and sects, as well as ill-humored reflections with respect to the institutions, manners, and productions of the country he is passing through. Most of all, should he shun comparisons of his own country with that in which he is a sojourner and a stranger. If he ever speaks of them in connection, it should be to allude only to those things in which the latter is superior to the former. Nor should he be always complaining how anxious he is to return home. Many lessons are contained in these lines of Shakspeare :

“ All places that the eye of heaven visits,
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.”

When the Christian is travelling in foreign countries, he should also be cautious as to the persons to whom he allows himself to be introduced, and as to the themes on which he converses with them. For however laudable may be his purpose in travelling, he must consider in what nation he is sojourning, whether he may talk freely on all subjects, or whether, on the other hand, he may be very reserved on certain subjects, without exposing himself to suspicion, or imprisonment, or death. He must beware of prying into political or ecclesiastical abuses, or of

casting forth heavy charges against oppressive or otherwise pernicious institutions. As the republican who travels in a country governed by a despot, is in many cases, especially in revolutionary times, beset with informers, he should avoid all intercourse with persons who are dissatisfied with the existing posture of political affairs, or deeply imbued with a party spirit. They will request the honor of introducing him to their political friends, and of accompanying him in his walks and excursions. They will entertain him with philippics against "the powers that be," and endeavor to engage him on their side. While he is enjoying their hospitalities, his movements are watched by spies, and in due time he hears *gens d'armes* knocking at his door, bearing orders for his arrest. Almost every town in continental Europe nestles parties and fraternities of malcontents, who "fret themselves and curse their king and their God and look upward," with whom no Christian who is a friend either to undefiled religion or to true civil liberty, ought to identify himself.

The northerner who is travelling in the southern states, ought not to make inflammatory speeches against their peculiar institutions, and should keep clear of confidential talks with persons held to service. If the northerner feels it to be his duty to assist the slave to escape from his master,²⁶ he ought also to feel it to be his duty to do it boldly and without concealment. Christians are children of the light, and all their conduct should be as open as the

²⁶ To entertain and defend the fugitive, when having escaped, he seeks an asylum under our roof, is quite another thing. This is required by the Divine law of hospitality. Deut. 23 : 15, 16.

day. The Christian religion does not, like some of the religions of the ancients, require a two-fold method of instruction, or any double dealing in practice. It is wholly at variance with all guile, even in a good cause. The southerner travelling in the northern states, should discuss with candor and coolness the question of slavery, and allow others to make as frank an avowal of their principles as he is himself permitted to do.

Too few travellers seem to consider that the right and the expediency of a free expression of their opinions, often meet and become inseparable. For while none will deny that we have in general a right to declare our opinions, few realize as they ought, that they have no right to say what it is inexpedient to say. The right of utterance is to be determined by persons, times, and places, as well as the subject-matter of discussion; "there is a time for every purpose under the heaven; a time to keep silence and a time to speak." A person has in general a right to give away pearls, but he has not a right—he is divinely forbidden—to cast them before swine, which will trample the gift under their feet and rend the giver.

The pious traveller should not take a female stranger under his protection, any further than to defend her against insults—to offer her his hand in alighting from a stage-coach, and to perform for her other common offices of kindness. An officious attention to females, of whose character he knows nothing, may endanger his reputation.

The courteous Christian surrenders his seat to any one who politely asks for it, or even bluntly demands

it. He offers it to persons who are too delicate to trouble others with their wants. At table he is not so intent on feeding himself as to overlook the wishes and rights of others. He is scrupulously honest in the matter of his fare, and even submits to extortion with an unruffled temper. However thoroughly convinced that a corporation has no soul, he always remembers that he has one.

When travelling by water, he will on suitable occasions, unite with others in inviting a clergyman or temperance lecturer to address the passengers, and if the speaker is an agent of a benevolent society, he should slip money into his hand, according to his ability, or propose a general contribution to the cause he advocates.

In general, acquaintances formed in travelling are expected to end with the journey.

There is a class of fashionable professors, who migrate from climate to climate, with almost the regularity of the feathered tribes; but unlike them, they gladden not the lands they visit with anthems to their Maker. In winter they sojourn in the Southern states or the West Indies; in summer they fly to the springs, the falls, the mountains, or the sea-shores of the North. Many of these persons travel, not in quest of health; they are as healthy as a life of luxury will permit; not in search of knowledge; they do not purpose that their wanderings shall add to their intellectual stores, but for mere novelty and amusement. "They are lovers of pleasure"—and is there not reason in too many instances to add—"more than lovers of God." They lodge at the largest hotels, and mingle freely with the throngs of gayety and gilded vice. For the

sake of gratifying a sickly vanity, they prefer the annoyances and temptations of the fashionable hotel, to the quietude and security of the temperance hotel or boarding-house, the sound of the viol to the song of praise, and the fumes of alcohol and tobacco to the incense of prayer. Avowedly members of churches, they give few evidences of a spiritual renewal, and are almost strangers to systematic benevolence. They wander as sheep having no shepherd, and what is worse, they stray from the shepherd and the fold without any sense of their danger. The man of the world looks upon their religion as a peace-offering to their consciences, and the man of God regards it as an offering of strange fire, which offends Heaven and consumes themselves.

The Christian should never travel for the mere gratification of an idle curiosity or a refined taste. ✓ How far he may indulge these pleasures in connection with higher pursuits, must be left to each one's own conscience. Were he to travel for pleasure only, he would find that it would greatly enhance it if at the same time he were to be executing some design of benevolence. A mind habitually busy with labors of love, will never be at a loss how to turn any journey to holy account. His love of souls will prevail over his love of art. Howard was endowed with a thirst for the elegances of life, and a refined taste in the arts. But what to him were the blandishments of queens, or the miracles of art, so long as there was any real misery to melt his heart, or any prisoner to rejoice at his approach? Every other inferior faculty of his soul bowed before the majesty of his philanthropy. When the apostle Paul visited

Athens, he might have indulged his curiosity among antiquities, and gratified his taste for the fine arts ; he might have laid himself down to meditate, and to meditate most profitably and pleasantly too in the Porch, the Lyceum, and the Academy. Socrates had not lived without the belief of a divine in-working influence ; might he not mingle a tear with the ashes of the philosophic martyr ? Plato had discoursed of the immortality of the soul ; might he not search after some bust of the great reasoner ? Aristides had won the name of “ the Just ;” might he not go and contemplate the statue that embodied an upright soul ? But it was the idols everywhere meeting his eye that moved his mighty spirit ; and as he passed along surveying them, one altar arrested his attention ; it was an altar with this inscription : “ To the unknown God.” He was more interested in the salvation of the living than in the monuments of the dead. Our divine Lord had an eye for the beauties of art. But when in his boyhood he went into the temple, it was not to survey the wonders and splendors of the sacred fabric, as another country lad would have done ; he entered its courts to do his Father’s business. And when in riper years he was going out of the temple in company with his disciples, they would have their Master join them in admiring the stupendous structure, exclaiming : “ Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here !” But his mind glanced away from the works of human skill to the approaching visitation of an avenging God, when, of all that immense pile, not one stone should be left upon an-

other, and when the city that reposed beneath its shadow, would exhibit scenes of famine, blood, and woe, which were to have no parallel in the annals of mankind.

CHAPTER V.

HOSPITALITY.

To receive and entertain strangers is a Christian duty as well as a dictate of humanity. The man of the world cheerfully extends a hospitable hand to those who promise to do him honor or afford him entertainment, and to those who come to him recommended by their rank, their elegant manners, or their pleasing conversation : nay, to the praise of whatever is least blighted by the frosts of sin, be it said, he sometimes shows the most cordial generosity to the unpolished, the unbefriended, and the obscure. But the Christian is moved to this duty, not merely by the kind impulses of nature, but by the dictates of disinterested charity, by the divine command, and by those illustrious and unequalled patterns of hospitality which are exhibited in sacred history. These being the objects of his frequent contemplation, call forth his admiration and provoke to imitation. He observes how well the hospitalities which Abraham and Sarah habitually used to all strangers, were suited to the heavenly messengers they unwittingly entertained ;²⁷ and how courteously

²⁷ The Mohammedans have a legend that Abraham was so hospitable, that on one occasion he invited even the Angel of Death to dine with him.

Lot afterwards received them at the gates of Sodom, how respectfully he pressed them when they refused his offers, and how much he proposed to sacrifice to their security. Nor can he less admire the generosity and delicacy of the princely Boaz in giving first his hospitalities, and then his marriage-vows to the widowed and defenceless Ruth, or the kind attentions of the noble lady of Shunem to the prophet Elisha, when she invited him to dine at her table whenever he passed that way, and caused to be built for him a chamber, and placed in it a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

The Christian has most frequent occasion to offer his hospitalities to his brethren. To those, no less than to others, he should be ever ready to show every attention which kindness and propriety can suggest. At anniversary and other meetings, when large numbers of them are assembled from distant places, it is not to be expected that many of them can come bearing letters of introduction to resident brethren. The latter, therefore, ought not to stand upon ceremony, but make the first advances to their brethren, offering them entertainment according to their ability. Our Saviour, almost at the beginning of his ministry, gave a beautiful instance of this open-hearted and informal hospitality. John the Baptist seeing Jesus pass by, said to the two disciples who were in company with him: "Behold the Lamb of God!" whereupon they being desirous of an acquaintance with the Messiah, followed him. Christ turning and seeing them following him, asked them: "What seek ye?" They in turn asked: "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" He replied, "Come and see." They then

accompanied him to his abode, and tarried with him the rest of the day.²⁸ A mode of address so brief and abrupt, would be in ill-keeping with the intercourse of modern society; nevertheless, it shows us the excellence of a frank and unaffected hospitality towards strangers and brethren.

In our search after guests on such occasions, we should address ourselves first to the timid, the retiring, and especially to strangers. We are commanded to be careful to entertain strangers. Men are sufficiently hospitable to friends, relations, and acquaintance, but they are slow to welcome to their homes the unbefriended and the unknown. Hence the Christian should prove the impartiality of his benevolence, by receiving under his roof the stranger; not desiring to boast distinguished and far-famed guests, but contented with enjoying the secret satisfaction of reflecting that perhaps he has entertained some angel unawares. Brethren "whose praise is in all the churches," will rarely lack offers of this kind, and however much you may covet them as guests, consider how selfish is that sort of hospitality which seeks not to entertain, but to be entertained. For such services, if services they deserve to be called, no reward is promised. Our Lord does not say: Inasmuch as you have done it unto the *greatest* of these my brethren, you have done it unto me. Our love to Jesus is best tested by our conduct towards "the least" of the brethren.

There is one case, however, in which duty requires us to withhold our hospitalities, even from professors of religion. When a person comes into the city, vil-

²⁸ John 1: 35-39.

lage, or neighborhood, to advance heretical, visionary, and pernicious opinions, we may not receive and lodge him. To entertain fanatics is to identify ourselves with their cause, at least in appearance. To have the reputation of encouraging them, even though we should not design to do it, is injurious to our Christian influence. The apostle John in writing to "the elect lady and her children," directs them not to bid such a godspeed, or suffer them to enter their house; since by so doing they would be viewed as "partakers of their evil deeds."

The pious stranger should, unless special reasons to be rendered, prevent, accept the first offers made to him, especially when made by a poor brother. To refuse his invitation, and accept another's afterwards made, leaves no very agreeable impression on the mind of the person offering the first. Nor should he be surprised to find those most competent to entertain him omitting to do so.

Many persons, "who seem to be somewhat," are apparently afraid, by introducing a stranger into the interior of their dwellings, to allow him to discover what they really are. Others live in so expensive a style that they cannot afford to lodge a stranger, and others are too much at ease to trouble themselves with a few civilities. In general the stranger will find the truest hospitality among what some are pleased to call the middle and lower classes of society. Oftentimes to the invitations of such he may confidently reply in the words which the lady addressed to Comus :

"Shepherd, I take thy word
And trust thy honest offered courtesy,

Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls,
In courts of princes, where it first was named
And yet is most pretended."

The apartments consecrated to hospitality ought to be provided with whatever contributes to the comfort of guests. The furniture, however, should always be in keeping with the resources of the host. People reluctantly take lodgings with one whose expenditures for their benefit are likely to be burdensome to him.

At the hour appointed for the arrival of our friends, we should go out to receive them, and after saluting them, take care of their baggage. If the guests are strangers bearing letters of introduction, or accompanied by our acquaintances, we should receive them at the door as soon as it is announced to us that they have arrived. If they come in a carriage, we should go out to the street and cordially welcome them. To remain within doors, and especially to continue seated, when strangers are announced, is only allowed to persons of distinction and public officers, when persons call on them for purposes of business, or on occasions of ceremony.

To bestow on our guests every kind attention, will do more to assure them that they are welcome to make our house their home, than all our declarations to that effect. Any neglect of our guests, such as resuming our occupations without asking of them the liberty to do so, or rendering any excuse for such behavior, to entertain them with bad fare and lodgings, and to grudge the loss of time requisite to gratify their wishes, will show our guests that our

regrets for not being able to entertain them better, for their early departure, and our urgent invitations for another visit, is only the language of dissemblers.

The rites of refined hospitality require us to show our guests whatever is interesting in the city, village, or neighborhood where we reside. But we should never direct their attention to any piece of furniture, statuary, or painting we may have in our house. It belongs to the guests to discover such things. It is a poor compliment to the discrimination and taste of our guests, as well as to our specimens of art, to be obliged to point out, eulogize, and appraise them. When you are a guest at the house of a man who speaks in high terms of his house furniture, paintings, statues, lands, or other possessions, you would betray a want of sensibility not to be interested in what pleases him; if he expresses extravagant opinions, with respect to them, you need not deny his assertions unless he is deceiving himself and others in these matters, but point out to him such excellences as suggest themselves to you, carefully avoiding assent to what you do not believe to be true. Should he ask your opinion of a thing upon which he has already passed a too favorable judgment, you ought gently to convey to him your sincere sentiments, or beg that your ignorance of the subject or other reasons may excuse you from complying with his request. Parents should avoid obtruding their dear children upon the notice of their guests. Hosts may, however, make parties in honor of their guests, composed of their relations, and such other persons as they may suppose to be agreeable to them.

We should not allow our assiduity to our guests to become officious. We should not do for them what they prefer to do for themselves ; such as engrossing the conversation, instead of leading them into it, and advancing our own opinions, instead of discussing theirs. If we would encourage the bashful and make them contented, we should not allow them to think they are the objects of our painful anxieties. By allowing them to act freely for themselves, we shall leave them more at ease, than when they are annoyed by our wearisome attempts to please. We should not seek to call forth their applause for us or ours, nor drag them about till they are fatigued, only that they may see and praise what gives them no pleasure.

If a clergyman is sojourning with us, we ought to give him time for retirement and study. When he has only a few hours to stay with us, after which he has public duties to perform, we should not enter into a long conversation with him, but after spending a suitable time in his company, offer to him apartments for study, dressing, and repose. It is scarce necessary to say that such apartments should be secure from intrusion and noise. If we accompany him to church, we should avoid conversation by the way, unless he introduces it. After the service, we should wait for him, and take him home with us, offering him refreshments, and permitting him to retire early. If it is the custom of the family to defer prayers till a late hour, a clergyman who is ill, or who has been preaching, should not be asked to conduct the exercise of devotion. He would, however, rather do it, than witness its omission.

Guests, on their part, should be contented and happy. They should not express a wish to be elsewhere, nor show great anxiety about those whom they have left at home. They should not express a desire for anything they know their entertainers cannot procure for them, or which can only be obtained at great expense. In conversation, they should eschew censures, denominational opinions, and allusions to absent persons, except to speak of their virtues. They should treat the servants courteously, and upon taking leave, if they are wealthy, it is sometimes best to make presents to them or the family.

The entertainer should courteously defer the time which his guests have appointed for their departure, but if he finds them resolved to take leave, he should concern himself in everything that may assist their setting out. It is customary to solicit of guests another and an early visit.

These directions would be far from complete were we not to mention what has already been intimated, that those who are used to entertain guests ought not to neglect the family altar. Those who have been frequently cast upon the hospitalities of their brethren, must have observed that they have been least served and respected in those families which are not wont morning and evening to offer to the God of the stranger their homage and praise. If they have not the disposition or the time to perform this duty which they owe to their heavenly Guest, the earthly guest cannot hope that they will cheerfully perform the more minute and frequent duties they owe to himself. And then how grateful it is to the soul of the agent, missionary, or other sojourning child of

God, to be permitted to swell the band of kindred and happy youths, and the domestics, as they gather round the family altar, to listen to the sacred oracles, to sing a hymn, and bow the knee in heartfelt prayer to the Father of all. It is from the services of these domestic sanctuaries that the wayfaring Christian gains spiritual strength for the journeys of each successive day. He hails them as fountains which are opened along his desert way to refresh and gladden his soul.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TABLE.

THE usages of the table are so various, that a volume might be filled with an account of the different modes of eating; and a second volume might be devoted to disquisitions on the merits of each. We shall, however, only give some directions which custom requires us to observe.

When a formal dinner is given, and the persons invited are assembled in the drawing-room, a servant or some other member of the family announces that the dinner is served up. Then the master or mistress of the house requests all to walk to the dining-room, and leads the way. Each gentleman gives his arm to a lady of his own age or rank, conducts her to the table, and if no direction is given, seats himself by her side. The hostess takes the head of the table, and the most honorable gentleman is placed at her right hand, the next in honor at her left.²⁹ The host takes the foot of the table, and the most honorable lady is placed on his right, and the next in honor at his left hand.

In arranging guests at table, separate as much as possible persons of the same profession: clergymen

²⁹ See Chap. III. on Honor and Precedence.

apart from clergymen, lawyers from lawyers, etc. Relations and acquaintance should not be allowed to sit together. By such a distribution of the guests, the conversation will be more general and interesting.

When a number of aged people are present, they should be seated near one another. Sully in his old age, used to dine at the upper end of the hall with persons of his own age at a table apart; giving, as a reason for this arrangement, that persons of different ages might not be tiresome to each other.

When the guests are arranged round the table, after they are seated, the master or mistress should ask a clergyman or some other person to say grace. He who performs this duty, should elevate his countenance so as not to embarrass the organs of utterance. It is rude to commence talking, or serving the guests *immediately* after grace is said.

At some tables, especially at college commons, it is customary for persons who come in late, upon taking their places, to cover their faces and say grace inaudibly, while their neighbors are in the din and hurry of serving themselves and others. What it is our duty to do in some circumstances, it is our duty to omit in others; it may be our duty to pray in a religious meeting, but not at the corner of a street.

It has been the custom for the lady of the house to seat herself at the head of the table, and the gentleman at the foot. It is a convenient mode for them to sit face to face at the middle of the table. But if the party is large and the servants well instructed, the master and mistress may leave to them the work of carving and of waiting on the guests, sit down indifferently at the sides of the table, throw off the re-

strains of entertainers, and lose themselves among the company.

When the party consists of mutual friends and acquaintance it would be well to dispense with a numerous attendance of waiters, and to appoint several of the guests to preside over the parts of the entertainment, or to serve out the various dishes. This was the manner of the Greeks even at their larger entertainments. Such a subdivision of duties, nearly all of which it is our custom to throw upon one person, ought to be generally adopted among us. It would break up the formality and unsociableness that spoil many of our parties; and it would thin those troublesome retinues of household servants, which could have been either necessary or proper only in feudal times.

Not the slightest allusion should be made to the merits of any dish upon the table by the entertainers, nor to those of any dish not on the table, by any of the party. The mistress should make no apologies for any dish, or for the fare in general. Neither should the master and mistress urge any one to partake of any dish; it is an insinuation that the person urged has not the good breeding to ask for what he wishes.³⁰ If one has occasion to ask for a dish, he should not say, "I will thank you, or I will trouble you for such a thing;" but say, "Will you please help me to such a thing;" and when he is served, say, "I thank you, sir." He should never put forth his hand for a dish which is before or beyond his

³⁰ "To press our superiors to eat or drink, is a breach of manners; but a tradesman or a farmer must be thus treated, else it will be difficult to persuade him that he is welcome."—*Swift*.

neighbor, but ask for it. A gentleman should not keep watch of the plate of the lady who sits next to him, in order to serve her ; but allow her to ask him to serve her to whatever she prefers.

Do not use smacks and exclamations, or pronounce eulogiums on the excellencies of a dish. Make as little noise as possible in chewing. Do not breathe hard in eating, or blow, in order to cool your tea, coffee, or soup, and avoid sucking and sipping while drinking. Never pour tea or coffee into a saucer, but drink it from the cup. Make no noise with your knife and fork, never dropping them carelessly upon a plate, or the table. Feed yourself with a fork or spoon, not with a knife.

Do not talk much during the first course. Our organs are so formed that we cannot speak and eat well at the same time. If you say anything let it be something which does not call for a reply ; never interrogate a person whose mouth is full. Never tilt your chair back at table, or anywhere else. The mistress, by rising first, gives the signal for the whole party—or at least all the ladies—to rise.

When Immanuel was dining with a distinguished Pharisee, he said to him : “ When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors ; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee.” This precept not only sets forth in a clear light the nature of true benevolence, but strikes at the basis of aristocratic exclusiveness, and of castes in society.

It does not rebuke, indeed, the distinctions which virtue, knowledge, rank, and wealth have formed among men, nor the intercourse of kindred minds, but only such perversions of these distinctions as serve to nullify the duties of benevolence which are due from the higher to the lower classes. The Christian does not comply with the spirit of this command who to-day gives a dinner to his rich and distinguished friends, and to-morrow to his poor and obscure neighbors. He should on all occasions extend his invitations alike to the rich and the poor, the high and the low. Both ought to be seated round a Christian's table at the same time, and without distinction. He should not make the indigent and the unhonored conspicuous, by uniformly giving them either the highest or lowest place at his table. Unless he entertains them with the same respect he shows to others, it will be said of him what Young says of one of the popes :

“ . . . his courtesies are smother wrongs,
Pride brandishes the favors he confers,
And contumelious his humanity.”

The provision made for the entertainment of parties, is, among some Christians, more lavish and expensive than creditable to their economy and consistency. In this respect their extravagance is scarcely outdone by the most prodigal votary of fashion. Their outlays for such occasions almost always surpass their resources. Their acquaintance know too well that they can ill afford to load their tables with such costly delicacies. Some suspect they are willing to hazard pecuniary embarrassment, even bankruptcy itself, so they may only stand in the front

rank of fashion, or appear more wealthy than they really are ; others are provoked either to emulate their sumptuousness, or pity their improvidence : to all who have any sensibility, the enjoyments of the occasion are lessened by the reflection that they are helping to impoverish their friend, and to prepare him to associate with their company the most disagreeable recollections.

Such expenditures for the gratification of the palate, indicate the opinion the entertainers have formed of the character of their guests. For why should they tax all the resources of the butcher, the fowler, the fisherman, the baker, the pastry-cook, the confectioner, the fruiterer, and the rest, unless to gratify the gormand ? Why such endeavors to please one of the grosser senses, except the party are slaves to it, and incapable of relishing rational diversions ? It is really more complimentary to one's character to offer him a cup of water, than a bottle of liquor, and to spread for him the repast of a Cato, than the feast of an Epicurus.

It is no less reputable to the piety than to the refinement of some Christians, that their example discourages such a pernicious custom. And they are supported by some volunteers from the world. Among people of fashion free eating and drinking are passing out of favor ; and the time is past when a gentleman must show his deference and esteem for his friend by praising and devouring food in his presence, and when he must evince the devotedness of his friendship by tumbling down under the table with him in oblivious drunkenness. While the children of darkness deem the prodigality and luxurious-

ness of other times unbecoming modern gentility, it ill beseems the child of light to practise any longer those indulgences of appetite, and habits of extravagance, from which even their avowed votaries are turning away with loathing and shame. It may well excite the sneers of the worldling to see those who profess to "hunger and thirst after righteousness," making their assemblies occasions of mirthful banqueting, and scenes of inconsiderate profusion, to see those whose empty missionary treasuries are sounding the knell of whole nations, lavishing upon a single fashionable party dainties sufficient to furnish the bread of eternal life to hundreds of starving souls.

Some opulent Christians think state and profusion necessary to shield them against the imputation of parsimony. But if their beneficence is not equal to their means, an appearance of bounty in their dinners, suppers, parties, equipage, furniture and the like, will not preserve their reputation unsullied. The world often witnesses the union of luxury and covetousness. Sallust says of Catiline, that he was rapacious of what belonged to others, prodigal of his own.³¹ How different was the conduct of Bishop Butler. The Rev. John Newton says that a friend of his once dined with the bishop, when, though the guest was a man of fortune, and the interview by appointment, the provision was no more than a joint of meat and a pudding. The bishop apologized for his plain fare, by saying that it was his manner of living, and that being disgusted with the fashionable expense of time and money in entertainments, he was determined it should receive no countenance from his example.

³¹ *Alieni appetens, sui profusus.*

Nor was this conduct the result of covetousness ; for, large as were his revenues, such was his liberality to the poor, that he left at his death little more than enough to discharge his debts, and pay for his funeral.

CHAPTER VII.

DRESS.

CHRISTIANS should observe more plainness and simplicity in the style of their dress than the people of the world are wont to do. It is always regarded an indication of an earthly mind to give undue attention to dress; and extravagance in matters of clothing is an almost infallible mark of selfishness. Hence wherever Christians are observed scrupulously to follow the prevailing fashions, and to rival their worldly neighbors in the expensiveness and ostentation of their apparel, there will we generally find many a vain spirit clothed in moral rags, and the cause of evangelism but a beggar for the crumbs that fall from the tables of the rich, and for the cast-off garments of their wardrobe.

It ill becomes the Christian to dress in the extreme of the reigning fashion, or to be in haste to follow a new one; as people of the world do, who generally adopt a new fashion for its novelty, and abandon it as soon as they are convinced of its absurdity. Yet it is not prudent entirely to disregard modes. When a fashion is introduced which is likely to prevail, before adopting it a Christian should modify it according to his figure, size, age, fortune, rank, and most of all to his religious character and obligations. Those who are

so far removed from the vanities of the world as to pay no regard to the style of their dress, leaving it to shopkeepers and tailors to select and modify the articles of their wardrobe, agreeably to their own notions of fitness, may, indeed, find themselves clad in conformity with the decrees of fashion, but not with the simplicity and dignity of beings who profess to be accountable. Even a due concern for the honor of religion would lead them to give some attention to these matters.

Plainness in dress is the unvarying fashion of Christians. No age, rank, or fortune, permits a departure from a rule so obvious and important. They should shun that richness and fashion on the one hand, and that coarseness and singularity on the other, which render dress an object of care to the wearer and of observation to others. A garment which attracts attention, never sits easy on the wearer; if it is odd it reflects on his sense and taste; if too rich it bespeaks his prodigality or dishonesty. No Christian ought to wear a dress more expensive than his means will permit. It is not enough that it is not more elegant than that of the class of society to which he belongs. Those who violate this rule injure their reputation and dishonor religion.

Antiquated fashions should only be followed by aged persons, and those of fewer years whom necessity forbids any other. Old ladies ought to abstain from feathers, gaudy colors and jewels. They should keep at a distance from the latest fashions. Old gentlemen should not wear garments which are tight, gay, and fashionable. In general, aged persons should aim no higher than ease and neatness.

Literary men, learned professors, and students ought to avoid a highly fashionable costume. Among the literati two quite opposite classes are to be found: the one are so slovenly that they could not endure themselves, had they time to bestow a thought on their physical condition; the other, from disgust of the former, turn fops and exquisites.

Young ladies should shun costliness and elaborate-ness. Rigid simplicity should at all times be respected, and any departure therefrom equally reflects upon their piety and their taste. Any attempt to improve upon the works of divine fingers is arrogance, and any attempt to deform them is suicide.

They should not wear any apparel designed merely for display, as ear-rings, and the like. The ears and nose are organs which have always defied the aid of ornament, and all attempts to embellish them have ended in deforming them. We have seen young ladies so radiant with the splendors of rings, pins, and beads, that they might almost be mistaken for the daughters of savages. We have been tempted to wish that they might have one other piece of jewelry—the fabulous ring of Gyges, which is said to have rendered the wearer invisible.

The divine command is, “that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.” The word of God is explicit on this subject. The hair is to be dressed without elaborate braiding and curling. This direction excludes the use of jewels of gold, pearls, diamonds, and all imitations of them,—in short, every kind of extravagance and deformity in dress and apparel.

Yet ladies are not forbidden to adorn themselves. On the contrary, God commands them to adorn themselves with the truest and most valuable jewels. He would be understood to mean, that to Christian ladies, diamonds, pearls, and gold, are not ornaments. If they were any adornment to their persons, surely infinite Goodness would not have forbidden their use—not he who has adorned the blue sky with gems of serenest ray, and made the rippled waters to sparkle with every hue of the sunbeam—not He who “caused to grow out of the ground,” trees not only “good for food,” but “pleasant to the sight,” and has left images of beauty wherever his forming fingers have passed—not He who, when he would have men build Him a tabernacle, gave the most minute directions with respect to the construction of every part of it; who filled Bezaleel with his Spirit, and Aholiab with wisdom, and both with skill to execute all manner of cunning workmanship, that along with their fellows they might erect a fabric which He might fill with the glories of the Shekinah—not He who caused the holy garments of Aaron to be made “for glory and for beauty.” Surely that Perfect One, who has shown the heavenliness of his taste in all that he has made, and in all that he has bid his creatures make, cannot be displeased with those who form and wear every chaste and innocent ornament. Nay, he has condescended to advise them with respect to the kind of apparel they should wear. It should be “modest.” He virtually declares that jewels made of the precious stones and metals are immodest ornaments, that instead of setting off personal charms to advantage, they impair them.

He insists on the wearing of such apparel as is equally ornamental and honorable to a woman. Every article of dress, not in keeping with a chaste, humble and unobtrusive mind, is a foul blemish, not only upon the person, but the character of her who wears it. A strong passion for jewelry is commonly associated with others less reputable. The cruel and idolatrous Jezebel was seen just before her inglorious death, sitting at a window with attired head and painted face. King Solomon looking through a casement in the evening, recognized a harlot by her glittering attire, and heard her enticing a young man by telling him of her bed covered with tapestry, with carved work, with fine linen of Egypt. The prophet Isaiah describes the Jewesses of his day, as joining haughtiness, vanity and wantonness, with great extravagance in jewelry and dress. He predicted concerning them what was afterwards fulfilled, that they should exchange their health for disease, their luxuriant hair for baldness, their perfumes for stench, their robes for sackcloth, their girdles for rents, their beauty for ugliness, and their honor for infamy.

From the earliest times to the present day, a profusion of jewelry has been regarded as the badge of prostitution, and the symbol of an impure mind. And though many virtuous and pious ladies have worn jewels, let it not be supposed that they did so in compliance with their own taste and sense of propriety. They did it, we ought to have the charity to think, in blind and unquestioning obedience to the laws of fashion. But if some of the great and the good have worn jewelry, it is nevertheless true that it is in general the insignia of unchastity and shame-

lessness. Such was the united judgment of the inspired apostles, Paul and Peter. They always set jewelry in opposition to chastity, humility and beneficence; the former contrasting gold and pearls, broidered hair and costly array with sobriety, shamefacedness and good works; the latter plaiting the hair and wearing gold, with a meek and quiet spirit. They thought them hostile to those true adornments which are expressive of the modesty, simplicity, and gentleness of the heart. Indeed they seem to have deemed all ornaments as scarce worthy the name, when compared with those of the mind; and pure virtues, and holy graces, prompting corresponding manners, ornaments of such costliness and brilliance as to cast all other decorations into obscurity, and to shame the doubtful glitter of gold, diamonds and pearls.

The apostles were, no doubt, protesting against a form of extravagance then prevalent among Asiatic, Greek, and Roman women. In ancient statues, medals, and bas-reliefs, are seen the braided and plaited tresses and excess of ornament which Peter and Paul interdict. Virgil delicately hits off the passion of the Roman women for decorations of gold, in the character of his heroine Camilla. He describes her as pursuing over the field of battle a Trojan chief who wears a golden helmet; a golden bow swings from his shoulders, a knot of gold collects the folds of his cloak, and the caparison of his horse is wrought with brass and gold. She purposes to slay him and adorn herself with the golden spoils, but loses her life in the attempt. Nor does this passion for adorning with this shining metal, appear to have been altogether peculiar to heathen females. Jewish ladies

are said to have worn golden coronets on their heads in the form of the city of Jerusalem. The apostles, as we have said before, regarded this kind of apparel as indicative of a light and impure mind. They express nearly the same opinion that Plutarch quotes from Crates. He says, "Neither gold, nor emeralds, nor pearls, give grace and adornment to a woman; but those things which clearly set off her gravity, decorum, and modesty." But, though these apostolic prohibitions were *primarily* intended for another age and another hemisphere, they were not intended *solely* for these. They are applications of certain general principles, which are to guide pious females of all times and lands.

First: they forbid every fashion and article of dress which is an indication of *immodesty*, and is calculated unduly to attract the notice of the other sex. To what extent women may aim at pleasing in such matters, must be left to each one's own conscience. It is very difficult to decide what is the safe medium in every case. Tertullian advises a neat simplicity: yet Horace confesses that it was by this that his faithless mistress had ensnared him; and Ovid says that men in general are captivated by neatness. Ben Jonson declares his preference for a negligent simplicity. He sings:—

"Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free;
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all the adulteries of art,
They strike my eye, but not my heart."

These instances show that the impression made on

the mind of the beholder by any style of dress, must depend more or less on his taste; and that in avoiding what is too attractive to one class, women are in danger of adopting what is equally attractive to another. Thus much may be said, that when their dress is strictly expressive of their piety and virtue, they are not responsible for the impression it makes on corrupt minds. The style which seems to combine decorum with the least liability to temptation, is that of blended simplicity and neatness.

Secondly: these apostolic writers forbid *vanity* in dress—whatever in material or workmanship, color or figure, or mode of wearing, denotes or fosters a proud, ostentatious, or haughty spirit. Effectually to prevent vanity in dress as in anything else, we must begin at its source in the heart. It is a just observation of Addison, that “Foppish and fantastical ornaments are only indications of vice, not criminal in themselves: extinguish vanity in the mind, and you naturally retrench the little superfluities of garniture and equipage. The blossoms will fall of themselves, when the root that nourishes them is destroyed.”

Thirdly: they forbid *expensiveness* in garments and ornaments, including such as require a great deal of time with the needle or in the dressing-room. It seems to have been generally taken for granted, hitherto, that the apostles do not prohibit costly vestures and jewelry to the great and the rich. Some popular commentators go so far as to recommend to such persons the wearing of these, in order that it may thereby give employment to the poor. It is plain, however, that every vice might be defended on

the same ground. But no rank or wealth can procure divine license for indulging extravagance in dress, jewelry, equipage, or any other thing which is to be consumed upon themselves. As to those who wear, or cause to be worn, extravagant insignia of royalty or badges of office, they are morally accountable whenever they are principals or accessaries in procuring them. The Gospel morality does not sanction extravagant expenditure, except in gifts to the cause of the Redeemer. Here they are not only innocent but highly commendable, if they are only prompted by evangelical love, contrition, humility, and gratitude. If any one finds fault with this doctrine, let him remember that Judas also complained of the disposal Mary made of an alabaster vase of costly ointment.

In this view we must conclude that the apostles did not condemn *merely* the wearing of "gold," "pearls," or "broidered hair," or any specific kind of costly array; for a person can easily, and without being at all unfashionable, perhaps, abstain from all the things *specified* by them, and at the same time, violate all three of the foregoing principles, by putting on articles and adopting styles of dress which are not expressly designated in the Scriptures. It is evident, therefore, that they did not intend to particularize every possible form of vice in dress, but to furnish tests by which every one may be detected.

There are certain cases where it is our duty to lay apart or put on such ornaments, as in other cases it would be allowable to wear or put off. We must, in things indifferent, respect the conscientious scruples of our fellow-disciples, and it is judicious, in such

matters to give way to the current prejudices of a nation, city, village, or neighborhood.

In all matters of dress, every monition of chastity ought to be strictly heeded. She is the oracle of God in the sanctuary of woman's heart. Would that she were more often consulted by the inventors of fashions; would that every woman of unsullied fame might listen to her slightest whisper—whispers which, if not instantly heeded, are seldom heard more. Would that she might flee, as the most dreadful enemy to her honor and peace, every fashion that aims at any exposure of her person. Who can number the multitudes of virtuous and hopeful daughters who have been ruined by fashions less destructive than those reigning at the present hour—fashions that would blush at the sight of some modern modes, but which nurtured the native pride and vanity of the heart, and tempted even the virtuous of the other sex to take liberties which, but for these tacit invitations to impertinence, their imaginations could never have suggested to them. It is hard for some mothers to deny their daughters those liberties in dress which every young lady of their age and rank is permitted to indulge. But tell me, thou broken-hearted mother, is it not more hard, more bitter to think of the fate of that daughter whom your indulgence has ruined, and who has fixed on your name and the honor of your family an ineffaceable stain of pollution. Christian matrons, break away from the charms of that immodest goddess, who yearly leads thousands to an infamous destiny. Let your maternal authority command your daughters, and teach their own consciences to

rule, and their own modest feelings to advise them; let your own example allure them; pray for them. After you have performed these bounden duties, tremble for them; for many a vain girl, it is with pain we say it, after receiving the timely admonition and the tearful entreaty of her mother, has still gloried in her shame, and is now repeating the lament of the fabulous stag who was proud of his antlers: "Ah, unhappy creature that I am! I am too late convinced that what I prided myself in has been the cause of my undoing; and what I so much disliked was the only thing that could have saved me."³²

Some scrupulously eschew the prevailing modes, however superior they may be to former ones, in point of decorum and taste. But to shun fashion altogether is superlative folly, for the more we affect to disregard dress, the more must we of necessity give our attention to it; and the more we affect to hide our pride under an odd exterior, the more do we proclaim it to all the world. There is no sanction for such conduct in the life of our perfect Exemplar. On the contrary, he rebuked the singularity of the Pharisees in such matters. We have every reason to conclude that the wisdom and taste which appeared in all his actions induced him to adopt the prevailing fashions with those modifications which his office and circumstances would suggest. For him to have dressed singularly and shabbily, had it produced no worse consequences, would at least have

³² "O! me infelicem! qui nunc demum intelligo
 Ut illa mihi profuerint, quæ despexeram,
 Etquæ laudarem quantum luctus habuerint!—PHÆDRUS.

sullied the piety of those women who followed him from place to place to listen to his discourses. That they were attentive to his necessities has never been questioned; their hands were often open and busy, to minister to his personal comfort; they bedewed his footsteps with their tears as he bore his cross towards Golgotha, and waited round him, when he suffered thereon; were last at the sepulchre on the night of his burial; and first there with spices on the morning of his resurrection. And the name of one of them who had been lavish of her attentions to his personal appearance, he bade his disciples hand down to the remotest generations. The seamless tunic of our Divine Lord was no worthless garment, else the beloved disciple would not have described it so particularly, and the soldiers would not have united in saying: "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be."

The consciences of some have arrived at such a pitch of refinement, that they can scarcely endure the sight of anything in dress except coarseness. They seem to think that vital godliness is inseparable from garments of camel's hair, leathern girdles, sheep-skins, and goat-skins. They forget that those martyrs and confessors, "of whom the world was not worthy," did not make it a point of duty to live in poverty and homeliness. They made it no virtue to submit to what they could not avoid; nor did they deem their miserable situation especially pleasing to God; for it was the enemies of God who drove them from their homes, and left them to languish in discomfort and wretchedness. It is not saying too much of them, that their great souls were not occu-

pied in contriving how they might differ from the rest of mankind in the form, texture, and material of their dress. Were they living in our day, they would show the same pious magnanimity in palaces which they then did in caves. Their dress, as that of all Christians should, conformed to their necessities and the fashions of the times.

Christians ought to shun affecting devoutness and gravity by the form or size of their vestures; it is a violation of humility and simplicity. Religious ostentation is always disgusting, never more so than when it shows itself in dress. Our Lord reproved the pompous Pharisees for this: "All their works," said he, "they do to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments."

The dress proper to be worn in a Christian congregation should be marked by plainness and simplicity. Spanish ladies always wear to church a black dress and veil. The solemnity of the occasion, the character of the assembly, and the state of our minds, require us to avoid a rich, elaborate, brilliant or showy costume. Those professors who violate this rule, do not fail to awaken in some minds such reflections as those of Cowper:

"A heavenly mind
May be indifferent to her house of clay,
And slight the hovel as beneath her care,
But how a body, so fantastic, trim,
And quaint in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge a heavenly mind—demands a thought."

The body of the Christian, which is the temple of

the Holy Ghost, is profaned when dressed with the tawdriness of the fop, or the coquet. It is as if the simple magnificence of Solomon's temple were set off with the tinselled baubles of pagan superstition.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISITS AND CALLS.

WHEN your former pastor, or any other clergyman of your acquaintance arrives in the city, village or neighborhood where you reside, it is your duty to make him the first visit, unless he comes to the place for the purpose of visiting you, when you should go and receive him from his conveyance, and accompany him to your residence. You should also observe the same usage in the reception of all other persons. When a clergyman is informed that a clergyman of his acquaintance has arrived in the city, village or neighborhood, he should call on him immediately. If from ill health or other causes, he cannot call on him, he should send him an early invitation to visit him at the parsonage.

In making visits of ceremony we remember the intervals of returning them, and to whom they are to be returned. In these, as in all other visits, consider at what hour others can most conveniently receive them. In general, visits of ceremony are made between the hours of twelve and five; each visit occupying a quarter of an hour, or less.

When you make a visit of congratulation to a friend who has been chosen to some civil or eccle-

siastical office, congratulate not him, but the state or the church, on account of the prosperity pledged to it by the election.

When you call at a house bearing a letter of introduction, send it up to the person to whom it is addressed, and give him time to read it before you appear in his presence. For the person to compel you to wait long would be discourteous.

In making a call, always send up your name to the person you desire to see, and wait till the servant returns with his orders: if he informs you that the person is not at home, leave immediately. Christians should avoid sending their servants to the door to say that they are "not at home," when they are at home. If all understood the fashionable import of the phrase, its use would be perfectly harmless, but since they do not, it is an abuse of language which is liable to become a snare to the conscience. A pious lady residing in the District of Columbia, once related to the author an incident occurring in her own family, which induced her to resolve never again to encourage the use of this phrase. One morning while engaged in domestic matters, a lady rang the bell, and no servant being at hand, she sent her little son to the door. He opened the door, and said to the lady, "Mamma says she is not at home." The word "engaged" is now generally, and very properly substituted.

If you call on a clergyman, do not interrupt his studies by calling in the morning, or at a time when it is understood he is professionally employed. If possible, call at the parsonage on that day and in that part of it, which he has allotted to receiving

visits. But when important business demanding immediate attention is to be transacted with him, you may call on him at any time, promptly present the object of your call, and when it is executed retire. When you find him engaged with other persons, do not call him aside and enter into a long conversation, but wait till he is relieved from other and previous engagements. Speak of the most important matters first; afterwards, if you have time, you may talk on other subjects, that when another person is announced, you may immediately rise and retire: should the person calling be your acquaintance, do not stop to talk with him, but merely salute him when you rise to take leave. Let punctuality and despatch mark all your engagements with men of business, professional men, and public officers.

Friendly calls are made at almost all hours and without much ceremony. In these some freedom is allowable, but no familiarity. Be careful not to dress more richly than those whom you visit. In town a friendly call should never exceed an hour; in the country it varies according to local usages. Let none presume that long visits and calls are necessary to preserve friendships: "withdraw thy foot from thy neighbor's house; lest he be weary of thee and so hate thee." Prov. 25 : 17.

When on taking leave, any one offers to accompany you to the door, excuse him, but if he persists, yield with a bow of thanks. Always accompany your guests to the door, unless you are an officer, or other public person, when you may excuse yourself.

Never be seen in a house with your hat on your

head, unless you are near the street door, nor then if a lady or other superior is accompanying you to the door. Though requested to put on your hat before going out, do it not until the moment you take leave.

CHAPTER IX.

SUNDAY VISITING.

THE fourth precept to the Decalogue implies an abstinence not only from all labor and business, but also from all secular amusements and pleasures. Were this day intended to be observed merely as a season of bodily renovation and repose, then whatever could contribute to this object would be allowable. But it is especially for the benefit of the weary and enslaved soul that this day is ordained to be hallowed. If we examine Isaiah's exposition of this command, we shall find it requires us to abstain from every thought, word and action, which affords gratification to a worldly mind: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."⁸³

Some respect as holy time only that part of the

⁸³ Isa. 58 : 13, 14.

sabbath which is usually set apart for public worship. It is long after the sun has cast his rejoicing beams on their habitations, that they rise to improve his light. And instead of invoking grace to qualify them for enjoying the blessings attendant on the sacred day, they commence it with laying schemes of amusement. The morning, which ought to have been employed in devout reading, meditation, and prayer, is passed in gossiping, in visiting, or in receiving their friends. At the appointed hour, they repair to the house of the Lord, with no other preparation for public worship than that which frivolous and secular conversation can make. As they go to church without spirituality, they derive no spiritual improvement from the services. The worship seems unmeaning and tedious; the minutes are long, because they do nothing but measure them. They wait with impatience the close of the service, and receive with pleasure the benediction which allows them to escape the blessings it invokes. They hurry home, or to the house of their neighbor, to finish the day as it was begun.

It seems as though these professors regarded the services of the sanctuary an irksome task, which must needs be rewarded by pastime—as a self-denial which ought to be compensated with some low self-gratification. If their conduct be any exposition of their faith, they cannot believe a heaven of devotion to be a heaven of enjoyment.

When the Christian's friends or relations visit him on the sabbath, the state of his mind and his religious duties forbid him to receive them with the same cordiality, and pay them the same attentions as he

would upon any other day. He should, however, treat them respectfully, and exhibit no impatience towards them for intruding on his hours of sacred rest. He should not talk on secular topics, but try to confine the conversation to the subject of religion. He should not offer them the entertainment they might reasonably expect on a week-day. He should strictly observe his regulations for family prayer and instruction, and when the hour of public worship arrives, he should rise as usual, and invite his guests to accompany him to church if they have not previously intimated to him another engagement. By resolutely withholding his mind from earthly cares and vanities, and allowing nothing to interrupt the sacred duties of the day, he will at length either convince them of the superiority of his enjoyments to theirs, or induce them to spend their sabbaths in the company of those whose conduct is more soothing to a restless conscience.

When a stranger is receiving his hospitalities during Sunday, the Christian ought to offer to go with him to any church he may prefer. If special engagements render it necessary for him to go to his own place of worship, he should mention it to his guest, and offer to go with him as far as the door of the other church, and if he takes him in a carriage, he should offer to return that way after the service and take him home. When the distance is short his guest should decline this offer, and return on foot.

Some kind Christians never think of visiting the sick till Sunday arrives. To visit them on that day is, in most instances, required neither by necessity nor mercy. Sick persons living near church usually

after the morning service, receive many fatiguing and vexatious calls. Annoyance apart, to visit the sick or the sound on Sunday, is not so strong a mark of friendship as to visit them on a week-day.

It is profaning the Lord's day to devote its hours to employments, for which we cannot afford to spare any portion of the rest of the week. It is to set a higher value on our time than on that of the Creator and the Saviour, is to esteem our bodies of more worth than our souls, and to gratify our own selfishness at the expense of God's honor; in a word, it is robbery in the first degree.

If the captive Psalmist was not mistaken when he said, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand," what do they lose who spend their Sundays in visiting? When the emperor Titus, recollecting one evening that he had done no act of beneficence during the day, exclaimed, "Oh, my friends, I have lost a day!" he might have comforted himself with the resolution of being doubly bountiful on the morrow. But what ought to be the exclamation of one who has lost a day, which no subsequent diligence can redeem and no repentance recall?

CHAPTER X.

VISITING THE SICK.

THE Christian does not need to be convinced that it is his duty to visit and comfort the sick. The dictates of humanity, friendship, and brotherly love no less than the precepts of his religion require such visits. A few hints, relative to the manner of performing this duty, may be of some use to the inexperienced.

When your relative, friend, or acquaintance, is very sick, either visit him or send a servant to him *daily*. But if the disease is chronic and not dangerous, daily visits or inquiries are not required. You should ask the servants whether you may be permitted to see and speak to the sick person ; if not, obtain what information you are able from them, and take leave. Never go into a sick-room without asking admittance.

After the first visit, which should be made at the earliest opportunity, you should make subsequent calls at an hour most convenient for the sick person. Approach a sick-room with a soft and careful step. If you are informed who his physician is, say nothing to his prejudice, nor give your advice concerning physicians and remedies. If you perceive that the invalid is melancholy or needlessly alarmed, be calm and cheerful, but do not tax him with timidity or attempt to cure his melancholy by merriment.

In general make no allusion to death in a sick-room. Some are naturally fond of gloomy themes; they seem to have been cradled in coffins, and to have learned the alphabet from epitaphs. Purely to gratify this disposition, and not from any concern for the soul or the body, they recount to the sick all the maladies with which their capacious memories are stored and fill the imaginations of the nervous and the feeble with the most appalling images of disease and death. If, however, you are called upon to deal with an invalid, who has a stupefied conscience, it may be your duty to show him clearly his alarming condition, and exhort him to prepare for the judgment. But you will not unfrequently find unconverted persons on the sick bed, greatly concerned for their eternal welfare. When the dying man was in health the words of warning might not have reached his heart; but how can he now turn away from a subject which is to him of infinite consequence? While he seems to himself an immortal being, about to be driven off the shores of earth, with no pilot to direct his voyage, let the Christian improve the golden moment; let him hold up before the sick one the blood-stained cross, and kindly bearing his trembling and emaciated arms round it, encourage him to cleave to it as to that which alone can buoy up his soul as it passes the sullen flood.

When a valetudinary is complaining of his ails, do not observe to him that you have the same indisposition, or a worse, or that everybody is now complaining of the epidemic. It is as if you should say that though you are as sick as he, you are too magnanimous to regard it, and that though others are

suffering as severely as he, nobody has so little fortitude.

Do not remark to the lame, blind, or other infirm persons, that people come at length to forget their misfortunes, that afflictions, after being long borne, become light, and almost cease to be considered as such. However true this doctrine may be, it affords no consolation to these unhappy persons. Besides, you are taking from their mouths sentiments which you ought to allow them the honor of expressing.

If a person is afflicted with imperfect sight, place the objects you wish him to see at a proper distance from him. Do not seem to admire or point at distant sights and prospects in the presence of a near-sighted person. When conversing with one who is partly deaf, moderate your voice so as to be distinctly heard; but do not scream in his ear, or show impatience if he fails to hear you.

When a friend or relative is on his death-bed, be not officiously attentive to him; show no affectation of compassion for him, or try to convince him that he cannot afford to dispense with your presence and care. Especially ought you to heed this caution, when there is reason to hope the person will make you a bequest. Leave such an one to his own judgment, if he have one, in the choice of his nurses and attendants. Let all your behavior toward him be such as not to give occasion for the insinuations of disappointed expectants. The fabulist tells us that several wolves once came to the stable where an old ass lay sick, under the pretence of making him a friendly visit; rapping at the door and asking how

he did, a young ass came out and told them his father was much better than they desired.

The sick, on their part, should distinctly yet frankly describe their symptoms when the physician asks them to do so. They should express their gratitude to him for his care, even when he has failed to effect a cure. When friends visit them, they should not, if possible, appear insensible to their presence, or chide them for not visiting oftener. They should not talk much of their infirmities to those who visit them, but converse on some cheerful theme.

The sick should endure with meekness and fortitude the treatment of those who upbraid them as the authors of their own ills. Howbeit this requires more than "the patience of Job." Mr. Censor is of the opinion that all our sickness is the consequence and the punishment of our own sins. He once said to a sick acquaintance: "Ah, sir, had you followed my advice, you would never have been in this sad case. I have repeatedly told you that this would be the issue of your imprudent habits; at least, I thought so. I have been expecting this: I do hope that if you ever recover—I fear you will not—you will not expose yourself to another such chastisement of your follies." The imaginations of the sick are sufficiently active in surmising the causes of their illness. To add to these gloomy, and, it may be, false suspicions, is often cruel, and sometimes dangerous:

"For oh! to be unhappy,
And to know ourselves alone the guilty cause
Of all our sorrow, is the worst of woes."

CHAPTER XI.

VISITING THE POOR.

THE visits of the rich are too generally confined to their equals. Among them are many who maintain a friendly intercourse and punctually exchange their civilities with their own class of society, but who do not so much as dream of calling at the humble, and it may be forbidding, cottages of the poor. Not seldom, there are indigent persons living in the same street, and members of the same church or congregation with themselves, whom they never visit, and of whose condition they are utterly ignorant.

Now in order to acquaint ourselves with the circumstances of these persons, no formal introduction will commonly be found necessary. The poor are willing to dispense with the rules of refined life, if they may only be permitted to welcome to their needy hearths some generous almoner of the Divine bounty. And access to them will be the more easy when they ascertain that he belongs to the same household of faith with themselves. It is highly important in such visits to learn the real condition of the poor. He may obtain the requisite information from some of their acquaintance, or he may be able, if he avoid intimating to them the object of his visit,

to obtain from their own lips the simple story of their poverty. Some knowledge of their morals, as well as their miseries, will enable him to bestow his charities on those who would not pervert them to their own hurt. If the almsgivers of our large towns would take the trouble to visit the poor whom they desire to relieve, they would materially diminish the gains of a class of rogues, who, taking advantage of the indiscrimination and carelessness of the benevolent, drive a lucrative business by street-begging.

But it is not mere pecuniary aid that will always afford the most substantial relief to the poor and the afflicted whom he may visit. The visitor of the poor, should always have in his possession Testaments and tracts to distribute among them. These will, with the divine blessing, sometimes be to them as a prize drawn for an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance in paradise. Kind and timely advice may occasionally direct them to employments and expedients which will materially improve their condition. Many of this class have but little of that thrift which is often found among those who do not particularly need to practise it. Some who are suffering from bereavement, solitude, disappointment or bankruptcy, will be grateful for the sympathies and counsels of the Christian. By visiting such, and showing a tender solicitude for their temporal and spiritual welfare, he will sometimes accomplish more than all the wealth of the West could effect.

Nor should we turn coolly away from the bolts and walls of prisons, hospitals, and alms-houses. It is too often presumed that the miserable inmates of these places are sufficiently comfortable under the care of

their keepers, and the patronage of the state. It is sometimes said the poor-laws provide that the benevolent may not always have the poor with them, and that the penurious may not be moved to compassion by witnessing individual want and suffering. In large towns, however, such institutions seem to be almost indispensable. The state can rarely be charged with making scanty provisions for the comfort and reformation of paupers, invalids, and convicts. The danger is that these provisions will be diverted from their proper channel. The public can never dispense with the vigilant and benevolent labors of private individuals. It will always leave much with respect to the social, intellectual, and moral condition of the poor and the suffering to the exertions of the philanthropic Christian. Let him never visit these institutions without gaining admission to the very presence of the guilty and the wretched; let him incline his ear to the story of their crime and their sorrow; he will learn that from it which will warn and instruct him, while it will enlarge the purest sympathies of his soul. Let him talk to them of Immanuel who preached the gospel to the poor, and made them his intimates, and who could deign to pardon the thief, and bear him company to paradise.

In visiting these public institutions, as well as private families, the Christian will find many opportunities favorable to religious conversation. Among no other class of persons may he so openly declare that his citizenship is in heaven as among the victims of poverty and crime. If he start serious topics in the company of the gay and the fashionable, he may expose himself to the charge of being a wild and mis-

guided zealot; but he will not often find them to be unwelcome to the poor, the afflicted, and the convict. The heart of the indigent is especially responsive to the appeals of the gospel. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?"

If Christians of wealth would devote some of their time to such visiting, they would receive abundant returns for their benevolent exertions. They would gain a most valuable fund of knowledge, with respect to those classes of society on which adversity has laid his pitiless hand, while they would return to their homes more grateful to Infinite Goodness for the conveniences and luxuries they enjoy, and less disposed to murmur at the allotments of providence. It would serve to break the languor and monotony of life; opening those fountains of benevolent sensibility, which unbroken prosperity is so liable to dry up. They would also be convinced of the transitoriness of human fortune. Beholding some of the children of the great and the rich, the victims of crime and indigence, they would give more heed to the moral culture of their sons and daughters, and learn to say with Job: "Thou destroyest the hope of man: thou changest his countenance and sendest him away. His sons come to honor and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low and he perceiveth it not." They would see the folly of trusting in riches, which take to themselves wings and fly away, and be induced to exclaim,

"What numbers, once in fortune's lap high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of charity!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE SIMPLICITY OF TRUE BENEFICENCE.

OF those three sister goddesses, the Graces, some Greek writers supposed the first to represent a gift bestowed, the second a gift received, and the third a gift repaid. And all must allow that if they had been competent to teach us to confer, accept, and reciprocate favors with propriety, they would have been what the ancients loved to imagine they were, the inspirers of all that is charming in deportment.

Nothing is more beautiful than the unadorned and informal operations of evangelic benevolence. Before the simple dignity of this heavenly virtue, how mean does the pompous, vain-glorious and self-righteous generosity of the world appear. Much as unbelievers boast of their benevolence, when did they ever think of obeying the inspired command: "Let him that giveth, do it with simplicity." As if anticipating their defence at the Judgment, their boastful inquiry is, "When saw we thee hungry and fed thee not?" How different will be the language of the saints in the last day. When the Judge will have said to them, "welcome and well done," and acknowledge their charities towards him, they will reply as though they were ignorant of having done him a single kind service.

Their response is replete with moral grandeur: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink?—when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? and naked and clothed thee?—or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee."

Honor never gives anything to those who do not allow him the pleasure of making the first advances. He who bestows his charities without attempting to conceal them, need not be surprised to learn that some consider his conduct as prompted by vanity rather than benevolence. A person's charities are commonly estimated, not by their amount, but by the manner of bestowing them. And wisely, for the latter is the surest index of his motives.

Some regard what they give under the guise of charity as that amount paid for applause; and applause they expect in return according to the laws of trade. Aware that a show of wealth wins more homage from the multitude than concealed generosity, they prefer to display it in personal extravagance when they cannot pour their gold into the treasury of some popular and fashionable charity. They turn coolly away from the imploring hand of obscure want, and open their purses to those only who know how to admire the lustre of their eagles, and the largeness of their benevolence. The most numerous and valuable gifts, are bestowed on those who do not need them.

In bestowing a donation, we should not accompany it with apologies. To say that we regret that it is so trifling, that it is not more appropriate or more timely, is sometimes embarrassing to the receiver, who in

such a case, will be moved to add a word of consolation to his thanks. Simplicity in giving, enhances the value of the gift and our gratitude to the giver. When our resources are very disproportional to our wishes and another's wants, we may offer an apology.

Presents should be made with the least possible ceremony. If they are small, they should be conveyed to the person without parade and without a word of explanation. When they are bestowed personally and the receiver begins to laud them, the giver ought neither to join in their praise nor to undervalue them.

Charity does not reprove the miserable creatures she relieves. The tears of her compassion blind her eyes to every vice. Were she to mention the faults of the poor, they would consider her gifts as begrudged; so she would excite their gratitude neither for her alms nor her reproofs. She imitates him "who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not."

Some Christians confer their gifts with a serenity and sweetness of mien which shows that they do not give grudgingly. They never seem so happy as when they have impoverished themselves to make others happy. Their beneficence is like those showers which come gently down on the withering fields while the birds are singing, the sun is shining, and the bow is jewelling the bosom of the cloud. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

We should not tell others how much we have sacrificed for their benefit. Some persons accompany a present with a great deal of information; they tell the receiver how much it cost, how rare, how curious

it is ; whereas they ought to allow the recipient to discover and mention these things, otherwise he may be at a loss for fine things to say to them.

To the rich and the proud we should offer favors with caution, and never ask to help them to things their own boasted wealth or generosity can supply them. They do not thank us for seeming to question their pretensions. When they desire anything their inferiors alone can give, they ought courteously to ask them for it. A wealthy man of real generosity will sometimes give the poor the pleasure of doing him a favor, and a man of profound learning will occasionally deign to be instructed by a school-boy.

He who relieves the wants of an individual should conceal the act from everybody else. He should tell no one how much he has given, to whom, or that he has given at all. It may be prejudicial to the giver to permit all the world to know that he is a very benevolent man, and, in certain cases, it is injuring the receiver to make it widely known that he has been relieved in such a way, to such an amount, and by such a person. Some may dislike him for having accepted a favor from that individual, and others may dislike the giver for aiding the receiver, and others again may jealously think that they themselves are more deserving of the gift. The recipient is the better judge of the effects of publishing an act of liberality. To him, therefore, should this duty be wholly resigned. When our alms are conveyed to the poor by the hands of another, we should conceal our names from them, unless there be special reasons for disclosing them. The command of our Lord, in whatever light we may view it, is sanctioned

by the dictates of courtesy : " When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what the right hand doeth ; that their alms may be in secret."

Many have been eloquent in the praise of the reflex benefits of benevolence ; but the most of them have not recollected that, to those only who give from right motives is it promised that their bounties shall return laden with blessings to their own souls. " Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them ; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." The deed which brings a sure reward to the doer must proceed from a pure heart ; those two rivers, Pison and Gihon, which compassed whole lands, and rolled back towards their source, had their origin in the garden of Eden.

The giver should bestow the gift in such a way as not to embarrass the receiver, to lay him under new obligations, or make him more dependent. We should not suppose that those who have received our charities have, by this act, sold themselves into servitude to us ; we should not rivet our golden fetters about their limbs unawares, and without their consent. Let no man do this, and then call it " giving."

Always greet an agent of a benevolent society with cordial cheerfulness, and when he announces his object, do not begin to grumble, frown or shake your head. Bethink how disheartening it must be for him to witness such demonstrations all day long. Give what you can, and along with it as calm a smile as ever lit up the countenance of a martyr. When he takes leave, bid him and his cause godspeed, and tell him how happy you shall be to see him again.

It is a breach of simplicity to remind others of

the gifts they have received from us. It is their duty to remind us of them, especially at a distant day ; this shows us they have not forgotten our generosity. To assist their memories is to rebuke their ingratitude, and to indicate to them, that we never forget what we have devoted to charity. If we are drawn into a controversy with one on whom we have conferred a gift, we should never, in any manner, allude to the fact. This is inconsistent with evangelical charity, which gives expecting no return. "Ah, sir, you have forgotten that thousand." "Oh, no ; generous friend ! You told me it was a gift. I am now happy to learn that it was not, and return it to you with interest."

A benefactor should show a uniform courtesy towards the persons benefited. It is enough that they are made dependent on his bounty. He should not add to the burden of their hearts the reflection that they are neglected or abused by him. One who has received distinguished favors from another, has reason to presume that he will delicately respect his feelings. A marked coldness of manner toward the relieved may lead him to suspect he has become the object of his friend's displeasure. If his benefactor has borne him through six troubles, but abandoned him in the midst of the seventh, it is in vain that he calls on him to counterpoise present neglect with past services.

Some benevolent societies in this and other lands have, it is to be feared, departed from the simplicity of charity by the methods they use to procure funds. They foster the vanity of their patrons, and appeal to unworthy motives in men of the world. When a

donation is made, especially if it be large, the name of the donor and the amount given is published in all the earth. Under the head of "receipts," or "donations," we see long columns of names, with few attempts at concealment. It were almost blasphemy to mention even the defects in these great and trustworthy engines for the evangelization of the world. Nor is the blame of their mismanagement always to be imputed to the treasurers, secretaries and other officers of these societies, since they are the obedient servants of the donors and members. Yet is not somebody responsible for those large and splendid certificates of membership which we sometimes see set in elegant frames, and hung up to adorn the drawing-rooms of the donors? Our divine Master rebuked the hypocrites who announced the time of their almsgiving by the blast of the trumpet. But the benevolent of our times have greatly improved on the inventions of the ancient Pharisees, for they are able, after the fact, to sound far abroad every generous name and every large donation. The short-winded heralds of the synagogue may now lay aside their trumpets, for the might of steam and the speed of electricity proclaim through all the world the magnificence of men.

He who should build a temple to Charity, and forbid his name to be inscribed thereon, but cause it to be hushed in the silence of oblivion, would be a real benefactor to mankind. A monument towering high over the field of battle might inspire the beholder with loftier patriotism; a stupendous cathedral might penetrate him with a deeper religious awe. But this

would do more than either. It would teach him unostentatious charity.

It is too true, however, that when some persons are besought to subscribe to a benevolent object, they excuse themselves by saying that they give in secret, or if the agent betrays any surprise that they should offer so small a sum, they hint to him, that he does not know how much they bestow privately on this or the other object. But the grief is, that nobody is able to ferret out the lurking charities of these men, while their glaring avarice does not escape the most obtuse of their acquaintance. Besides, if they gave from singleness of motive, they could not easily be prevailed upon to own that they had given even in secret. If such persons are driven in self-vindication to allude to their secret charities, it is incumbent on them to state *to whom*, or at least *what amount* they gave.

Let none infer from the foregoing, that our Master condemns all publicity in almsgiving any more than He does all publicity in prayer; for He disapproves the one as much as he does the other, in certain circumstances, and when actuated by motives of vanity and self-exaltation. *Then* both public praying and giving are to be exchanged for a more unpretending mode. On the other hand, there are occasions where an exposed beneficence is obligatory, as glorifying God, and profiting mankind through good example. We are commanded to let our light so shine before men, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven. He who would decide whether his gifts shall be secret or open in a particular case, must set over against the

above precept this other: "Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth," and then rely on his own moral judgment to decide where the medium course lies. For these Scriptures, like many others, though they are apparently contradictory, are intended to guard us against two opposite errors.

CHAPTER 'XIII.

THE DUTIES OF THE NEW CONVERT TO HIS FORMER COMPANIONS.

WHEN the new convert parts with his associates, the courtesy of his deportment should convince them that it is not self-righteousness, but true humility—not an aversion, but a well-regulated love to them which induces him to alter his conduct towards them.

One of the first obligations he is to discharge is that of seeking to make ample amends to any person he may have injured or offended. If he previously sought an accommodation in vain, he ought now to make another attempt. Such a change may have been wrought in the temper of the person with whom he has been at variance, or in his own, as shall assist to re-establish an amicable intercourse between them. Upon the renewal of friendship, when heart inclines to heart, and each is willing to yield everything to the other, he should seize the golden moment to express his concern for the eternal welfare of his friend.

With all his former acquaintances he should converse seriously on the subject of religion; except, perhaps, with those who are his superiors in age,

rank, and learning, to whom, with a view to avoid being thought irreverent and impudent, he may present such tracts or other books as are adapted to lead their minds to serious thought. With those of his superiors with whom he lived on terms of intimacy, he may converse as freely as he was accustomed to do on other subjects before his conversion. He may be required to entreat those to whose disordered consciences no amenity of address could make his appeals agreeable. But he should not be dispirited when his words of kindness are ill received by those to whom the entreaties of an angel would be equally unwelcome.

Sinners often accuse the gentlest expostulator, of severity, when he has done no more than provoke their own consciences to rebuke them severely, and the spite which they vent upon him is sometimes rather an outburst of long pent-up enmity to the truth, than of hatred to him. Let him therefore bear opposition patiently, and be more concerned for the souls of his fellow-men than for his own sensibilities. Let his spirit be meek and earnest, like that of the orator who, when his life was threatened for maintaining unpopular opinions, said, "Strike, but hear me." Nor let him be intimidated by false accusations of impertinence from those who are guilty of the blackest ingratitude for his many and painful exertions for their conversion. There is somewhere a story of a man who, in being saved from drowning, received a hurt on the tip of his ear, of which he was heard the next day bitterly complaining, having, in so short a time, wholly forgotten his deliverer. The conduct of this man differs from

that of the persons in question mainly in this, that he showed that he did not value highly enough the services which had been done him in saving him from death : whereas they complain of and even angrily resist the very attempt to save them from hell.

He should avoid every appearance of scornfulness in his bearing towards his former associates, and all expressions of contempt for their favorite amusements. When invited to go to their assemblies, he ought neither to be astonished nor offended, even if he has reason to suspect that the invitation proceeded from unfriendly designs. He should decline such invitations with courtesy.

The new convert should permit no imaginary obstacles to discourage him ; if, from any cause he is not allowed to converse with his unbelieving acquaintances, he may ask them to peruse some evangelical book. Sometimes a letter will prove to be a heavenly message. Nor should he delay the performance of this important duty. The ardor of first love will carry him over such difficulties as the languor which sometimes follows it would not assist him to surmount.

Many a one who has devoted himself to the cause of the Nazarene, has suffered the severing of tender earthly ties, and the reproaches of his former partners in folly. To become an outcast from the circles where, a little while ago, to have been forgotten would have been considered as infamy ; to be shunned by those who once flattered and caressed him, to bid farewell to the friendships of the world, is, to a mind of delicate texture, easy compared with

enduring meekly the gibes and innuendoes of which he will be made the unmerited victim. He is in danger of gloriously exulting over his persecutors, when he ought silently to compassionate their delusion, and seek, by his meekness, to show them that divine grace can subdue every malignant passion, and that the fires through which they drive him, serve but to light his way to heaven, and to reveal to him the glories of his eternal abode. Let persecution excite neither scorn nor hatred, but joy and hope. "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy : for behold your reward is great in heaven."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INTERCOURSE OF THE CHRISTIAN WITH THE WORLD.

DIVINE grace does not disqualify man for performing his duties as a citizen, a subject, a friend or a relative, but prepares him, better than anything else, to adorn and ennoble each of these characters. Nor will the laws by which he is governed allow him to omit these duties, even if, in order to their faithful performance, he should be required to hold frequent intercourse with people of the world.

The Hebrews religiously shunned the society of men of other nations. They sometimes carried their scruples so far as to deny Gentiles the common offices of humanity and mercy. They could not understand how our compassionate Saviour could consistently dine with heathens. At the great feast given by Levi, at which Jesus and his disciples reclined, along with a great company of publicans and others, the Pharisees asked: "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" Jesus replied: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." This answer, while it rebuked the Pharisees for their self-righteousness, declared to them that he moved in the society of the wicked with a view to secure their repentance and salvation.

It was only by coming into this polluted world that the Son of God could save it, and it is only by a judicious intercourse with it, that his disciples can hope to aid in its renovation. "The salt of the earth" should come in close contact with those whom it is appointed to preserve; the light of the world, should be borne into the very midst of the moral darkness it is commissioned to dispel. But still our Redeemer would not have this salt so absorbed by the world as to lose its savor, nor this light extinguished by descending too deep into the damp pits of wickedness. His prayer for his disciples was: "I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the world, but that thou wouldst keep them from the evil." He knows that the intercourse of society is well adapted to develop, as well as display the Christian graces. Bad as the world is, he expresses his confidence in the divine influence that protects his friends against its assaults. He knows that it is a more affecting exhibition of his guardianship, to lead them through the fiery furnace unharmed, than to keep them at a distance from its heat. Yet had it been an easy thing to live in this polluted world without contracting its defilements, he would not have prayed so earnestly that they might so live. And if it was an object of his anxieties in his last days on earth, it ought also to be the object of our deepest solicitude and our most fervent prayers. No Christian is so completely armed against the shafts of his adversaries as not to be sometimes wounded by them. In the various commerce of life, he will oftentimes need to repeat his Saviour's prayer, and to ask that he may equally be kept from austerity and laxness, from unsociable-

ness and intimacy, and know how to flee the amusements of the worldling, and yet how to commune with him in his serious moments.

With respect to the extent of this license, it may be said, in general, that the Christian is not forbidden, for the purpose of executing a benevolent design, to go into any company not assembled for vice, dissipation, or amusement. Our perfect Pattern seems never to have violated this rule. He dined at tables where some of the company were wine-bibbers and gluttons, but those dinners at which he was a guest, were not given for the gratification of drunkards and gormands. They were designed to refresh the guests and to facilitate a friendly intercourse among them. He went to a wedding in Cana, and assisted at a ceremony which was usually accompanied with unlicensed festivity. But marriage was a divine institution, and he consented to be a guest that he might sanction it by his presence, and by performing a miracle to convince unbelievers of his Messiahship. We may add, by the way, that those who set up a plea for wine-drinking, on the ground of this miracle, might with equal color of reason advocate a general poisoning of swine; for Christ by a miracle once let loose some demons which entered into a herd and drove them into a lake! Our Lord was not answerable for the perversion of his miracles by men or devils.

Some, magnifying the temptations presented to a Christian at such a marriage feast, and such dinner parties as our Lord honored by his presence, his teachings, and a miracle, would dissuade us from imitating this part of his conduct. They say the immaculate

Son of God might safely expose himself to moral dangers, which imperfect beings are not allowed to hazard. But why then did he suffer his disciples to accompany him into the society of those who would endanger their piety? They were not, like himself, proof against every assault of the tempter. Had the Holy One designed that his followers should not go into this society, he could have told them so. We may securely go whither his imitable example leads, and his sanctifying Spirit attends us.

Cases do indeed occur in which it is not judicious to keep up even a conscientious intercourse with people of the world. When St. Paul said, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient," he established a principle which, if consulted, would correct many errors in casuistry, and forever hush many doubtful disputations in morals. Where, from a misjudgment of our motives, or from other causes, our example might become a snare to the consciences of others, or lead them into sin, duty requires us to abstain from what would otherwise be an allowable course of conduct. In many instances there are combinations of circumstances which render it wrong for a Christian to go into the society of unbelievers, even though it should be his object to secure their eternal salvation.

The piety of professors, who live on terms of close intimacy with people of the world, is exposed to insensible but rapid decay. Rare indeed are the instances of the escape of such persons from the infection which worldlings diffuse through the circles they compose. The more the man of the world is capable of captivating the professor by the brilliancy of his

talents, the charms of his conversation, and the elegance of his manners, the more easily does he lead him into prayerlessness, worldliness, and infidelity. Even when the Christian is able to maintain vital godliness in the commerce of the world, he loses what is needful to its benign influence upon others—a reputation for it. All men receive the maxim which an ancient heathen poet has clothed in verse, and a Christian apostle has quoted and approved ;³⁴

“Bad company good morals doth corrupt.”

They do not look for eminent piety among those professors who are the associates of the irreligious. Did spiritual persons more frequently refuse the ensnaring offers of worldly companions, and shun the coteries of fashion, they would more clearly evince the superiority of their virtues to those of unbelievers, and how greatly the proprieties of Christian conduct surpass those of worldly politeness. It is only when the child of God is removed from the children of the world, that his manners can be fairly contrasted with theirs.

When a person of indiscreet or unprincipled life, at the house of a common friend, makes advances towards us, it would commonly be safe to meet him half-way, and enter into general conversation with him ; but we ought not to identify ourselves with him, or by our abearance convey to him or others an approval of his conduct. A cold but respectful reserve is our only shield in such an emergency—a shield

³⁴ 1 Cor. 15 : 33. Φθείρονσιν ἡθὴ χρηστὴ ὁμιλία κακὰί.—From Menander's lost comedy of *Thais*.

which some discourteously present to everybody with whom they are not intimately acquainted.

We owe social duties to relations, friends, and acquaintance, which nothing but the grossest defections from virtue, on their part, can excuse us from discharging. With respect to our intercourse with immoral persons, the apostle Paul has made important distinctions. To the church at Corinth he says, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man *that is called a brother* be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one not to eat." Then as a reason for such conduct, he declares that the disciple has a right to judge of the morals of those whom he recognizes as brethren, but not a right to judge of the morals of those whom he meets with in general society; for, he adds, "What have I to do to judge them also who are without? Do ye not judge them that are within?" He who is unwilling to assist his brethren in excommunicating an unworthy person is presumed to sanction his behavior, but if he happen to be in a party, members of which are vicious characters, he cannot be supposed to sanction their sins, nor in most cases, is he competent to form a just opinion concerning their morals. A church is an association of persons kindred in religious character, but diverse in social and intellectual qualities. But a party is in general composed of persons, having like intellectual tastes and social pref-

erences, without much agreement in religious principles. The harmony of a church is destroyed as soon as the members forget the great doctrines to which all give assent, and begin to contend about matters of philosophy, politics, or science, with respect to which no two may agree. Likewise a company met for conversation is divided the moment the members begin angrily to assail one another's principles and practice. Here one is not allowed to sit in judgment upon characters, or to shun persons who have been condemned neither by a church, a court of justice, nor public opinion. When he meets with a person in company, where his vicious character is not generally known, he may not, unless the company is in some way endangered by his presence, inform them of his offences, since they have no jurisdiction in criminal cases. He may complain before the civil authorities or before a church, if the individual is a member of any; but he cannot without a violation of courtesy throw out insinuations hurtful to any person present or absent.

Those Christians sadly err who conceal their religion when they go into the society of the world. By making it appear to the man of the world that they are not religious characters, they do him a wrong. They tempt him unwittingly to take liberties in conversation with them, which, had they given him the slightest clue to their principles, he would have carefully eschewed. When he has thus been misled, what unfavorable reflections does he indulge. He regards them as the hypocrites of fashion, and himself as their dupes. No irreligious person, in whose composition gentility is the slightest ingredient, desires

to be left ignorant of the moral character of the people he meets with in society. If he is uninformed on this point, he is in danger of offending them. The uncertainty embarrasses him, and the dread of wounding the feelings of others renders him awkward and uneasy. Though the politeness of the world forbids it, Christian delicacy would advise the religious professor by the gravity of his bearing, the piety of his conversation, or by some other means, to give the man of the world some intimation of his godliness.

If a Christian upon entering a drawing-room finds the company to be other than he had reason to expect when he accepted the invitation, and discovers preparations for cards or dancing, he may converse a few minutes with the mistress of the house, and then unostentatiously withdraw. If he happens to be in a company where profane or obscene language is used, he will not rebuke the offender, but leave that duty to the gentleman of the house. When he is in a public place or conveyance he may courteously remind the offender of the impropriety of his behavior.

The Christian should not converse with unbelievers on the subject of personal piety, when they are in the company of their companions and acquaintance. Many who would treat the subject with levity in company, will in private, converse on the subject with sobriety and candor. Besides, should the Christian's pearls chance to fall out of their casket, they will be safer before one than before a crowd. The main opposition our blessed Master met with, was from assemblies of unbelievers who encouraged and supported one another. On the other hand, we know with what success he talked with the Samaritan

woman at Jacob's well in the stillness of noonday, and with Nicodemus who stole to his lodgings under the cover of night. The treasurer of Candice probably unbosomed himself to Philip with less reserve when a lonely traveller, than he would have done among the courtiers and retinue of the Ethiopian palace.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DIVINE LAW OF COMPLAISANCE.

SOME professors would have us distinctly understand that they are not "man-pleasers." They have attempted to please both God and man, but have learned that it is not possible to do both; and henceforth their one aim shall be how they may please God. If the world be displeased with and persecute them, what wonder? so did they hate the Son of God, and so persecuted they the prophets. Suiting their demeanor to their principles, they go on daily growing blunt, disobliging and uncivil. As unkindness and neglect are always reciprocated, it is not long before these professors begin to look upon the people of the world as their personal enemies, while the latter consider the former as akin to those persons mentioned in Holy Writ, who "please not God, and are contrary to all men."

Such persons should beware that, while they unduly exalt the claims of sincerity, they do not entirely set aside those of all the other Christian virtues. Sincerity is to be regarded a grace of the Spirit only as it is exercised in a guileless and unaffected exhibition of the amiable and virtuous qualities of the mind. A person may be inhumane and hurtful

with all sincerity. When a person is compelled to adopt rude and ungentle manners in order to establish a reputation for sincerity, it may be safely inferred he is craving credit for a quality he does not possess. When displeasing dispositions are openly expressed, they are none the less offensive to us for being unfeigned. Wicked as dissimulation ever must be, we would all prefer its attempts at concealing the corruptions of the heart, to that sort of sincerity which makes a shameless exposure of them.

There should be nothing in the conduct of the Christian displeasing to the man of the world, unless it be his godliness. His general behavior and address should be such as to offend no reasonable being, and his comity and uprightness should blunt all the arrows of hatred and envy. Daniel the prophet seems to have been a man of engaging manners, as well as strict piety. Although called to discharge the unwelcome duties of his office, as seer in the palaces of kings, such were the gentleness and suavity of his address, that he uttered predictions the most unfavorable to the great without incensing them. He possessed more than the polish of the courtier, with none of his adulation and meanness. He wore his courtliness as a girdle of grace round his prophetic mantle. It was this that softened the austerity without impairing the integrity of his character, and raised him to the highest offices, under the reigns of three successive kings, two of whom were hostile to each other, and all naturally entertained prejudices unfriendly to his nation and his religion. And when the princes above whom he had been exalted, and who were envious of his glory, sought his fall,

they paid him the highest compliment when they confessed that they would not be able to find any ground for his impeachment, unless it was the devotion and consistency of his piety. Three angels, on as many several occasions, unanimously applied to him the epithet "well-beloved." It was chiefly by the amenity of her manners that an humble Jewess, a captive and an orphan, won the heart of Ahasuerus, and the queenly crown of the Medo-Persian empire. Though she was beautiful, it was not by her beauty that Esther became the successor of Vashti; for who could possess higher personal charms than the latter? Such was her beauty, that the king in his vanity would exhibit it to his princes and his people. It was rather the delicacy and deference of Esther's behavior, contrasting as it did, with the haughty and contemptuous bearing of Vashti, which rendered her a meet and agreeable companion for the monarch. When she was brought from her apartments to be presented to the king, although it was customary on such an occasion to give a maiden whatever she desired for the ceremony, she obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her, among other things, by requiring nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain appointed. With what insinuating address, yet modest courage did she, at the peril of her life, invoke the royal clemency in behalf of her doomed countrymen and her hated religion. How admirable was her manner of inviting the king and Haman to the banquet. With what condescension did the queen give the cruel Haman an opportunity of extenuating his crimes, and of pleading for his life in her presence. No man of sense, how far soever ad-

vanced in the school of modern politeness, can read and ponder the sacred memoir of this pious, elegant, and majestic queen, without admiring her skill in the art of pleasing.

Nor are these the only examples of manners that were alike pleasing to God and man. Not to speak of several other Hebrew personages who, while they held their citizenship in another world were beloved by all who knew them as sojourners in this, the early history of the Son of God may be confidently adduced as testimony that a deportment pleasing to the world strictly consists with the entire approbation of Heaven. Reverence for age, obedience and deference towards superiors, respect to equals, kindness and affability to inferiors—all the milder virtues must have adorned the youthful Jesus, else it would never have been said of him that he “increased in favor with God and man.” And after he commenced his duties as the teacher of a new religion, repulsive as his doctrines were to almost all orders in the nation, and persecuted as he was by reason of them, no one ever accused him of a single act of discourtesy. He had a most happy way of doing whatever his benevolent soul projected. His manners were always winning and conciliatory. When he performed that miracle among the Gergesenes, by which a demoniac had been healed, and a herd of swine drowned, at the request of the inhabitants, he left their territories and returned to Capernaum. He deigned to adopt the Jewish code of manners with those modifications only which a more sincere and liberal spirit demanded. Faulty as some of the rules of their ceremonious etiquette were, he seems

not to have considered them the worst part of their social system. He was sensible that by a general conformity to it, he would be able to introduce his gracious messages to many who could not otherwise be approached.

Observing that John the Baptist had excited dislike by abstemiousness and austerity, he conformed to the habits of both Jew and Gentile. And while he, no less than John, failed to please all classes, he showed his desire so to do, and accuses the Jews of repaying his complaisance with obstinacy and petulance.³⁵ Unlike too many false reformers, he disliked tumult, contention, and notoriety. Without assuming any authority in the state, or any ostentation in his miracles, he sought to preserve the goodwill of the magistracy, and the quietude of the people. To gratify the wishes of fond parents, he suffered inquisitive children to gather about him, and he put his hands upon them and blessed them. On this occasion, as on several others, his disciples rebuked the people for their disrespect to their Master; but He could meekly bear the rudeness and opposition of those for whom He came to die. And while He was the Infinite One, and his sublime mission was the salvation of a world, he graciously deigned to respect the most tender feelings, and to sympathize with the slightest infirmities. He did not break even the bruised reed, or quench even the smoking flax. What a tender regard for the sensibilities of others must He have cherished, who could send his disciple a fishing, and perform a miracle, that he

³⁵ Matt. 11 : 16-19. Luke 7 : 31-35.

might not offend the tax-gatherer, who wrongfully demanded tribute at his hands.

Next to our perfect Exemplar, Saint Paul deserves to be imitated as a pattern of complaisance. The apostle of a "sect everywhere spoken against," he possessed the rare faculty of winning the good-will of men of all nations and creeds. He sought to please people of the world not only in great matters, but in small. So refined was his delicacy, that he was attentive to the least thing which could please the least person. This greatest of great men, whose mind was occupied with the care of all the churches—whose eloquence had made him pass for a god, and drawn after him many followers in all the countries where it had been heard, was not ashamed to confess that he observed every punctilio in the art of pleasing—did not blush to declare that he sought to please all men in all things.

The most superficial reader of his life and correspondence can scarce fail to observe the refined courtesy of his conduct. Several men of politeness in this country and in Europe, who have not scrupled to scoff at his doctrines, and vilify the name of Christian, have expressed great admiration for the only virtues of Paul they were capable of appreciating, honestly confessing that he was a man of exemplary gentility. Anthony Collins, the famous deistical writer, once said at the table of the first Lord Barring-ton, that he was sure Saint Paul must have been a finished gentleman. In his letters also he expresses his admiration of this character in the apostle.

On the other hand, these and many other illustrious examples, as well as daily experience, evince that the

most amiable Christians must often fail to please an unbelieving world. The Prince of Peace himself, with all the loveliness of his conduct, frequently met with those to whom he was courteous in vain, and who were the more hostile to him as they beheld fresh exhibitions of his benignant nature. It is difficult for the Christian, while performing the duties of his religion, to give the highest degree of pleasure to the man of the world, for the heart and the conscience of the unbeliever widely differ in their preferences ; and he who aims to please the one, generally offends the other. When the Christian endeavors to lead the sinner to the cross, he generally gains the approbation of his conscience, but the displeasure of his heart. When, on the contrary, the Christian joins with the worldling in his vicious amusements and vocations, he pleases the heart of the latter, but offends his moral sense. Since the pleasures of the unbeliever's conscience are very few, and most appeals to it painful, the Christian ever affords him more satisfaction by addressing his social or intellectual, than by appealing to his moral powers. Hence the man of the world is more entertained by the defects than the excellences of the Christian, and most disgusted when his religious character is most conspicuous. Yet conspicuous must be the virtues of the faithful professor, whether he moves among the children of light or the children of darkness. Nor can the worldly professor of religion be so lost in any fashionable assembly or folly, as not to be recognized and watched by the eye of some man of the world. Those who by effacing all marks of piety from their behavior, aim to be esteemed members of "good society," rather than Christians, ex-

cite the more aversion the more they strive to please. Their light cannot be hid. Some ray stealing through an unconscious rent in the robe of fashion will betray its concealment, and make the most vicious despise the concealer.

The man of the world, however, fails of universal complaisance equally with the consistent Christian. The impiety of the worldling is as unpleasing to the Christian as the piety of the Christian is unpleasing to the worldling. No suavity of behavior can entirely atone for ungodliness. He who disobeys my adorable Father, and disdains my beloved Saviour in my presence, treats me with the rudest indignity.³⁶

The pleasures of the Christian are not those of the worldling. So wide is the moral interval between the child of God and the child of the Wicked One, that he who cordially enjoys the society of the one is ill at ease in that of the other. A friendship is sometimes formed between a Christian and a man of the world, based on a congeniality of social and intellectual qualities. Few friendships, however, are lasting which are not founded on the evangelical virtues. There is indeed a superficial amiableness which can for a short time captivate the believer, but a more

³⁶ Lord Chesterfield, unsurpassed as he was, and perhaps ever must be, for a refined sense of the becoming and for elegance of manners, wanted the qualities which could render him highly agreeable to pious persons. His politeness and popular vices stole the hearts of people of the world, while his practical infidelity grieved his believing relations and friends. In his last hours his awful insensibility to his moral state wrung the heart of his devout lady with anguish, and when she sent for the Rev. Rowland Hill, he refused to see that man of God. Unceremoniously rushing into the presence of the King of kings, his last words were: "Give Dayrolls a chair."

intimate acquaintance wears away the gloss, lays bare the real character, and dispels the attractive illusion.

But in the common communion of men, and the secular employments of life, the Christian need not give offence to the man of the world. A correct moral sense will teach him, and his circumstances will prepare him to shun such exhibitions of his faith and practice, in his daily vocations, as would displease the worldly, without improving them. Now he may establish the superiority of the Christian virtues to those which the world boasts, and show that honesty, suavity, veracity, and kindness, which, while they outshine those spurious virtues of the same name, which are claimed by unbelievers, gain their favor and admiration. There must be something unchristian in the professor who scandalizes people of the world, when the offence does not arise out of his religion. The Messiah was universally beloved during that part of his life which was devoted to the duties of a private station. And Demetrius, we are told, had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself.

The Christian may not aim to please as a final object, but contrive by pleasing to lead men to repentance, to faith, to hope, to God. When he seeks to please others for any other purpose, he offends his own conscience. What Christian who has returned to his closet from a company into which he bore the simple intent to be complaisant, has not been painfully sensible of having carnalized his affections, dissipated serious thoughts, and banished from his heart every holy and serene joy? How comfortless is the suspicion that we have pleased any soul to its tem-

poral hurt or its eternal unhappiness. "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."

Some religious people appear to think that to perform a deed elegantly is to deprive it of half its value; that the demands of duty are so urgent they must be pardoned for a gruff and ungente execution of them. They know of no way of performing a difficult act, except by a headlong plunge. There are others, on the contrary, who sin for the sake of being agreeable, and sacrifice their consciences on the altar of the heathen graces. Between general offensiveness and unlimited complaisance, there lies a way of pleasantness and a path of peace. Let the conduct of the Christian say to the man of the world: I would sacrifice anything but the truth of God and my conscience to please you. For reconciling antipathies, overcoming prejudices, and composing differences, a blunt directness of address is not so successful as it is customary. It is a mathematical truism that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but courtesy would humbly advise us sometimes to unite them by a graceful curve.

CHAPTER XVI.

FLEXIBILITY OF MANNERS AND INFLEXIBILITY OF PRINCIPLE.

“FLEXIBILITY,” says Cardinal de Retz, “is the most important qualification for the management of great affairs.”³⁷ If this maxim is true in politics, it is equally so in religion. The feelings excited and nurtured by Gospel truth, are of the strongest and most unconquerable kind, and whether they be those of attachment or aversion, none but the most mild and conciliating methods will generally serve to direct or overcome them. Every ambassador for Christ, —and, in an inferior sense, every Christian is one— in the work of reconciliation, will find use for the most extensive knowledge of the human character, and the readiest skill in adapting his behavior to all its varieties. And as he meets with diversities of mind, knowledge, rank, and condition, he will feel the constant obligation to follow the apostolic precept, “making a difference.” He will also find scope for the exercise of such faculties in reconciling brethren to each other and to the truth. To such a service Paul could bring the aid of his admirable tact and address. His epistle to Philemon, recommend-

³⁷ La flexibilité est de toutes les qualités la plus nécessaire pour la maniement des grandes affaires.”

ing to him Onesimus his fugitive slave, is not surpassed by anything in the history of diplomacy.

The Holy Scriptures have not left the Christian destitute of the brightest examples of this most valuable quality. Leaving out of view the examples which the Hebrew narratives supply, let us once more contemplate that Perfect Original, after which we ought to be always modelling our conduct. His manners most admirably accorded with every circumstance of his life and mission. Whether we view him as a weary traveller seated at noontide by Jacob's well, talking with the ignorant and vicious woman of Samaria, or as a religious teacher retired for the night discoursing with the inquisitive and learned Nicodemus; whether we contemplate him in the halls of the rich publican at Capernaum, or in the humble cottage of Martha and Mary, at the marriage feast of Cana, or at the grave of Lazarus; whether rebuking the proud, or encouraging the humble—preaching to the various multitude, and plucking the flowers of his inimitable eloquence from the fields amid which he spoke, or arguing with the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, silencing them by appeals to their own laws; whether we behold him making his public entrance into Jerusalem amid the homage and acclamations of great processions, or led without her walls, stooping under his cross and compassed by an exulting rabble—we must in each instance admire the fitness of his behavior to person, time, place, and condition. He who could lay aside his regal dignity in celestial palaces, came down to his rebellious dominions in this lower world and grace the office of a servant, has given us no evidence that

he wanted flexibility of manners. Many abuses in the civil and religious institutions of the land he did not directly attack, but, passing them in silence, he everywhere taught precepts which would eventually destroy them. He directed his disciples to adapt their behavior to their circumstances. When he sent them on their first mission, he forbade them to provide themselves with purse, scrip, and shoes for their journey. But when he was about to send them abroad among all nations, under less favorable auspices, he commanded them to furnish themselves with the very articles he before denied them. He instructed them to salute a house when they entered it, but not to stop and salute men ceremoniously by the way; to pronounce a benediction on the household which treated them kindly, but to withhold it from that which should not; to receive thankfully the hospitality of a city when offered, but when denied, to depart, shaking the dust from their feet; to seek entertainment in some worthy family, and sojourn in it till they left the place, and not to go from house to house in quest of hospitality. In enjoining on his disciples these and other observances, he taught them to use pliancy, prudence, and tact in their intercourse with all sorts of men.

But while they were to accommodate themselves to the customs of all men, they were not to yield a single point of conscience to any, or bend the rule of truth to their crooked passions and misshapen notions. Their master was careful to annex to the prudential precepts he gave them the following injunction: "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." By this command he undoubtedly meant nothing less than

that they should be flexible in their deportment. The serpent is the most versatile of creatures. He can adapt his pliant and spiral energies to every emergency and condition. In his motions he can be as swift as the pigeon, or as slow as the tortoise. He traces with ease the most crooked paths, gliding down a declivity, across a ravine, or through a hedge : and the same undulating movement which bears him through a meadow enables him to swim over a brook. He curls himself into a circle, rolls himself into a ball, moves erect projecting his fiery tongue, or reposes on the sunny rock as if harmless and tame. His colors vary with his undulations, and with each new point of view. He changes his coat with the seasons. In one species he sounds a rattle, in another he hisses, in another whistles, in another bellows. In the character of a rattle-snake, he is charmed by the notes of the flute ; as an adder, he hearkens not to the song of the charmer, charm he ever so melodiously. He takes his prey in three elements with singular facility. He catches fish in the pond ; he robs the ewe of her milk, and while he has no wings wherewith to cleave the upper atmosphere, he is a deadly enemy to the feathered tribes. Winding itself up the trunks of trees he rifles nests of their young, or lifting his head high on his coiled tail, seizes the bird as it flies, and when he cannot by this means secure his victim, he is said to dart still higher his fascinating glare, to penetrate it with an overmastering charm, and draw it within the sweep of his envenomed fangs.³⁸ Had the Divine Teacher only bid his disciples "be wise as serpents," they might

³⁸ Buffon, Goldsmith, Shaw, Chateaubriand.

have been expected to ask whether it was consonant with their profession and office to blend in their manners the versatility of the serpent with his malice. But, as if anticipating such an objection, he added, "and harmless as doves." He knew that if they should use their tractable manners, to execute wicked designs, they would be the most mischievous of men; whereas should they employ them for beneficent ends, they would strew with blessings every path they might tread. When such powers are guided by good-will, they seem to make the highest style of Christian; him who, by pleasing both God and man, contrives to reconcile apparent extremes. Such a being is, it must be avowed, rare in any society, and in any country. And, perhaps, one reason why there are so few such characters, is found in the odium, in which the serpent is generally held, and which keeps men from studying his qualities and copying them. But were the serpent to be despoiled of his malignity, and men of their recollection of it, he would come to be a greater favorite than the dove—nestled in all bosoms—cherished as a universal pet.

The twofold excellence in question is strikingly exemplified in the apostle Paul. So completely were these qualities mingled in his character that he could shape his demeanor to every variety of circumstances, without prejudicing in any degree his sincerity and integrity. In describing the manner of his entrance into the hearts of so many opposite classes of mankind, he says, "Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became a Jew that I

might win the Jews ; to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law ; to them that are without law as without law, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I weak, that I might gain the weak ; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Unless we bear in mind the early advantages and experiences of Paul, we may sometimes be led to regard him as a parasite, sacrificing truth and honesty to a desire of pleasing. But when we reflect that he was born at Tarsus and educated at Jerusalem ; first a persecuting Pharisee ; then a gentle Christian ; a privileged Roman citizen, yet entitled to the advantages of Jewish institutions ; an apostle of Jesus Christ, eloquent both as an orator and a writer ; and master of several languages, yet a tent-maker ; endowed with power to perform miracles, but afflicted with infirmities,—when we reflect on these things we can easily understand how, by availing himself of the advantages of his birth, education, gifts, rights, and experiences, he might adopt the manners of a great variety of characters, and show a tender fellow-feeling for them without the slightest resort to dissimulation and artifice. To all these facilities he added a frankness and affability which obtained for him a passport into the fortresses of his enemies, and enabled him to push his moral conquests over the selfishness, superstition, and idolatry of mankind, to the utmost limits of the civilized world. He lost no opportunity of securing the confidence and esteem of men. By his amenities, he gained the friendship of Julius, a courtly centurion who was carrying him in chains to Rome, and who

during a storm at sea, would, but for his attachment to Paul, have suffered his soldiers to put all the prisoners to the sword. Yet none of his expedients are dissonant with magnanimity. He betrays the greatness of his soul as well when on one occasion he confesses himself to be the least of all saints, as when on another, he declares that he is not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles ; when he suffers persecution joyfully, and when he refuses to be scourged contrary to law ; when he allows himself to be illegally imprisoned, and refuses to be liberated except by the magistrate who sentenced him to chains ; when he owns that he labored with his hands, and when he asserts his claims to Roman citizenship.

He did not fear the charge of inconsistency when on the tempestuous seas he said the crew could not be saved unless they heeded his directions, and yet had confessed it had been revealed to him that none of them should be lost. And though the personal character of Festus deserved not to be respected, the apostle with his usual deference to authority, addresses him by the appellation of "most noble." What a blending of dignity and humility, of decision and gentleness, appears in his defence before the pomp and attendance of the united courts of Agrippa and Festus. He detested flattery, but he could justly and delicately compliment the king before whom he was tried.

Without compromising an iota of essential truth, he would cheerfully comply with the wishes of others in things indifferent. Habitually tender and meek, he could firmly oppose the double-dealing of Peter ; and with the severest censures to his converts,

could mingle all the praise they deserved. He yielded nothing either to Judaist or Paganist; still he accommodated himself to the manners and habits of both. Whether he is reasoning with the Jew, conciliating the Pharisee, or confounding the Sadducee, disputing with the Stoic or the Epicurean, or instructing and persuading the idolater, the versatility of his powers alike appears. His judicious conduct in Asia Minor in conforming to the harmless scruples of his kinsmen the Jews; his dexterity and decision among the idolatrous, but polite, inquisitive, and philosophic citizens of Athens; the nobleness of his bearing towards the hospitable islanders of Melita; his complaisant gravity at the elegant and voluptuous court of Cæsar; all his movements between the streets of Jerusalem and the mountains of Illyricum, all the recorded actions of his eventful life confirm his own words, "I am made all things to all men."

What was the animating principle of all this liteness of deportment? It was a heaven-kindled love for his kind. This compliance with the habits, tastes and feelings of others was practised, that he "might by all means save some." It was the innocence and fondness of the dove that prompted and guided the arts of the serpent. While his one purpose was the entire renovation of human nature, he adjusted his manners to all its obliquities and tortuosities, without deviating in any degree from rectitude of principle, or cooling at all the ardor with which he wrought good and travelled heavenward. He was like the river Meander which he crossed in his journeyings: it now curves majestically along the bases of mountains,

and now winds gracefully through unbroken plains, yielding in its lambent flow to a barren rock on this bank and a blooming grove on that, but always reflecting the light of heaven, pursuing the same general course, and rolling its waters into the sea toward the same point in the horizon whither they glide from the fountain at its lofty source.³⁹

It will be seen that the Gospel law on this subject, is at war with the lax and compliant morality of the Jesuits. They accommodate all their opinions, and practices to circumstances, and make every virtue yield to a selfish and bigoted expediency. They think that a supposed good purpose warrants the use of violent means, and to excuse every species of quibbling, disingenuousness and fraud. This law is equally hostile to the scheme of "Double doctrine," or "Reserve," as held by the Roman and Romanizing clergy of our times, which bears a close resemblance to the duplicity of Loyola, and to that of Pythagoras and his followers, including the theologians of Alexandria, who divided doctrines into two classes, the *esoteric* and the *exoteric*. The former were to be believed by the privileged and initiated disciples, and the latter were to be taught to the

³⁹ Porphyry, a subtle enemy of Christianity, alluding to Paul's withstanding Peter to the face, charges him with rudeness and incivility. It was proper, however, that he should administer the rebuke publicly, as the offence had been committed in public. The matter of his address is cool reasoning: * with respect to the manner we are left in the dark. Paul's decision and ardor may have occasionally been excessive. With his pre-eminent piety he was, according to his own conviction and confession, an imperfect man, and ought not therefore to be considered an *infallible* and *exclusive* pattern.

ignorant and precluded multitude. This double-dealing has no place in the policy taught by our Divine Master, which is as innocent as it is transparent, and commends itself not only to the judicious, but to the benevolent. It stands in strong contrast with the craftiness and dissimulation of the Pharisees, which he repeatedly and severely rebuked.

And it is worth while to add that the policy we are recommending, can be employed only in the advancement of the pure Gospel. When the Gospel is corrupted, the policy by which men prefer to forward it becomes equally corrupt; on the other hand, a false policy can only avail in the furtherance of a spurious religion. The apostles were taught a prudence which was in perfect harmony with the benevolence of the purposes which were to be accomplished by its aid; and the first attempt which was made by St. Peter to spread Christianity by dissimulation, was promptly exposed and defeated by St. Paul. Nor was there any need of dissimulation to assist in planting the primitive churches. The simplicity of their economy, rejecting as they did, all unessential and burdensome ceremonies, gained for them an easy entrance into every form of society, and at the same time held out to the apostles little temptation to practise those pious frauds that would have been required to establish a more complicated system among prejudiced communities. And when we turn to the history of churches, we are struck with the steady and healthful growth of those which, from the apostolical origin of their doctrines, ordinances and government, are wonderfully adapted to the wants and condition of all the nations of the earth. We are also struck

with the proportional decay of those which are more or less "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The latter must in general be composed either of persons who do not believe what they profess, or of those who are profoundly ignorant of the inspired writings. And they can only make proselytes by openly holding out temporal rewards or penalties, or else by secretly pursuing a Jesuitical line of policy. They cannot press into the service of error the harmless wisdom which our divine Instructor teaches. The moment the attempt is made, the dove and the serpent are put asunder. The latter returns to his diabolical arts, and the former flies quickly away.

A supple deportment not supported by unyielding principle, is passiveness and servility; unprompted by kind intentions, it is dissimulation, hypocrisy, and flattery. He who has a conscience and a creed so pliable that he can be obsequious to wrong and error, is as incapable of pleasing as he is of profiting honest men, and he who seems equally compliant in his manners and opinions will be suspected of concealing beneath these soft appearances a false heart and a base design.

On the other hand, he who has inflexibility of principle, but wants flexibility of manners, is liable to the charge of obstinacy and severity. He neglects the proprieties of person, time, and place. Some men are useful in their calling or profession and unwavering in faith, and aim, but they are so deficient in tact and wisdom, that their pious exertions are almost worthless to the generality of men. They are too stern and dogmatic. Their arrows are let off according to the strictest rules of archery, and they fly

straight towards the enemy, but they are so blunt that they do not pierce his heart : they only gall and infuriate him. They are strong men but they are too much like Goliath ; their strength is not always available. They are armed to combat the mighty, not common men, who are wont by the aid of skill to supply the deficiencies of their strength. They are pious, but their piety is too gigantic for worms of the dust, and their mode of showing it is so untoward, that the world is slow to allow that they have any.

The firm mind and the soft manner unite in forming the symmetrical character. But while we copy the wisdom of the serpent, let us never forget to displace his malevolence by the kindness of the dove. There may be the most resolute maintenance of bad dispositions as well as good ones, and there may be perfect facility of behavior without a single grain of good-will. A purpose inflexibly dark and crafty is often coupled with a manner flexibly deceitful and cold. But when Christian love binds the flexible to the inflexible, every one must admire the felicity of the union. It is this love that gives a sacred pleasantness to the unwavering mind, and a holy dignity to pliant manners. When the apostle Paul declares that God gives us "the spirit of love," as well "of a sound mind," and exhorts us to "hold fast the form of sound words in love," "to speak the truth in love," and "in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves," he is essentially insisting upon this very union of firmness and pliancy. Holy love softens the expressions of a firm mind, sweetens the cup of bitter teachings, and takes captive the heart before unstooping truth has conciliated the intellect.

But while we should always be able to yield, we ought also to know when to be unyielding. The wisdom that would dictate the use of indirect and submissive methods with some persons, would teach a resort to such as are direct and summary with others. Some men by adopting a style of manners as inflexible as the doctrines they advanced, have brought to their aid the fluctuating multitude, convinced the doubting that their designs were sincere and benevolent, and recommended their cause to general confidence, thereby bearing down all opposition, and raising the cross over altars and shrines which could not otherwise have been demolished. After the manner of Cromwell, they have defeated the enemy, not by manœuvres to threaten his position, or to cut off his retreat, not by stratagems to disconcert his plans, or induce him to change his ground, but by an open and vigorous onset in the name of the Lord of Hosts.

With this subject we take leave of the reader. Much more might be said, and much more ought to be said on many points, which we have only touched upon. The courteous feeling should direct every minute and intricate duty of life, and like the conscience, it needs to be duly enlightened before it can be safely followed. We must add, however, that no degree of enlightenment can be a sufficient substitute for observation and watchfulness, or authorize any one to feel a blind confidence in his own accomplishments; and he will have profited little by the foregoing pages, who rises from their perusal to commence captious critic upon the behavior of his fellow-worms.

To those who desire to attain to excellence in courtesy, we again recommend the cultivation of that evangelical love, whence it springs. It is this that gives the last touch and highest polish to the Christian character, and imparts to it an unfading loveliness. If it was a happy fancy of the Grecians that the goddess of beauty charmed by means of her girdle of grace, it is a practical truth that the Christian charms by the help of his girdle of charity—that girdle which, imparting to the soul it compasses the power to please God, and all godlike men, is denominated by Him who wove it, “The bond of perfectness.”

THE END.

NOTICE.

The author of this work will shortly prepare for the press another ON CONVERSATION, "a topic which deserves a volume," as Mr. Abbott in his "Young Christian" justly remarks.

LEAp'29



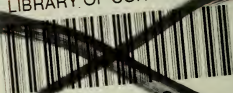
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Dec. 2004

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 012 903 912 1